PERIODICAL ROOM
GENERAL LIBRARY
UNIV. OF MICH.

AUG 11 1941

THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XXI. No. 536 [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, MAY 31, 1941 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

CONTENTS

	Page
The Tragedy of France	547
The Strength and Weakness of the Government. By Harold J. Laski	548
Five Shillings a Child	549
A London Diary. By Critic	550
Rubáíyat. By Sagittarius	552
This England	552
Goblin Market. By Charles Esam-Carter	552
Hess's Chicken. By Y. Y.	553
Country Notes. By V. Sackville-West	554
The Euston Road Group in Oxford. By Clive Bell	554
Correspondence	555
G. Bernard Shaw; Samuel Katz; Dorothy F. Buxton; Two Czech Democrats in Khaki; Sir Alfred Watson; Percy W. Bax; Ivor Montagu; Henry W. Nevinson.	
Books in General. By V. S. Pritchett	557
Reviews:	
The Obscure Image. By Edwin Muir	558
Reviews—*contd.*	Page
Anybody's War. By John Mair	558
A Democratic Nation	559
Aeschylus and Social Revolution By J. R. Bacon	560
New Novels. By Anthony West	560
Shorter Notice	562
Gramophone Notes. By Edward Sackville West	562
Week-end Competitions	566
Crossword	566
The Week in the City. By Urbanus	567

MR. ROOSEVELT SPEAKS

To have the great voice of the American President thundering across the ocean its encouragement to us and its will to resist the Nazis is in itself a tonic to a hardly pressed people. It is enough to most people that Britain is not alone, and that Mr. Roosevelt declares that the vast resources of the United States must and shall be effectively put at our disposal. Beyond that few people pause to consider. Yet it is essential that we should understand how much Mr. Roosevelt promises, what he is able to fulfil and the long-distance implications of his resolute support.

In declaring a state of unlimited emergency the President assumes a virtual dictatorship of the United States. He has power to take over transport, to commandeer the radio for the purposes of propaganda, to control imports and all exchange transactions, to requisition ships and to suspend laws governing working hours, and, most important of all, to decide on industrial priorities and, if necessary, to take over industrial plants. His proclamation amounts, in fact, to full mobilisation of America under his personal direction.

The speech was intended primarily for domestic consumption. Mr. Roosevelt warned America of the dangers of Nazi domination; though he may be held to have exaggerated the immediate danger of the Nazis to the United States, he was obviously justified in urging the peril to the U.S.A. if Britain were defeated and the Germans enabled to pursue an active policy of penetration amongst the Axis populations in North and South America. His emphasis was on the "freedom of the seas," a principle over which Britain and America have quarrelled bitterly in the past, but which now means no more than an Anglo-Saxon determination to maintain their sea communications and to ensure a supply of goods from America to Britain. The most striking part of Mr. Roosevelt's speech was his repudiation of the legalistic approach to war of which the Nazis have made so much use in the past. Mr. Roosevelt is determined to meet the Nazis on their own ground. They are accustomed to penetrate and occupy a position while pretending neutrality, and to justify it afterwards by some entirely ludicrous legal pretext. Mr. Roosevelt is prepared to meet them in kind. He will not wait until the Germans have reached America's "front yard." If the interests of defence required, he would take a leaf out of the Nazis' own book and occupy advance positions, including perhaps the French and Portuguese islands, which there is only too much reason to think the Germans intend themselves to use in the Battle of the Atlantic. By the same argument Mr. Roosevelt could send troops to Ireland or Britain itself.

Mr. Roosevelt said nothing of convoys and did not announce what positive actions he would take to fulfil his promise that American aid should actually reach Britain. He let out the vital fact that Britain was losing three times as many ships as she was able to manufacture. He would take steps to meet this threat to both countries. No doubt the steps will be in part dictated by his anxiety that the first shot shall be fired rather by the Nazis than by the United States.

The speech hastens the process in which the world is being divided into two great warring blocs. Assuming that the U.S.S.R. becomes an open or remains a reluctant and partial ally of the Axis, the great land bloc of Asia and Europe, with Vichy-France included in its orbit, confronts the coalition of the two Western democracies, while Japan, a partner in the Axis, is still restrained—one cannot guess for how long—from actual aggression against British and American interests in the South by fear of the American Navy and by the still steadfast resistance of China. Britain becomes an advance aerodrome of the United States—an aerodrome unfortunately crowded by forty million civilians.

As events assume this grim shape, we hope that Mr. Roosevelt will recall that American intervention in the last war was decisive from the ideological as well as the military point of view. Mr. Roosevelt alone has the power to state terms on which the war might end if the Nazi threat is overcome. He alone has the power to shape war aims which may yet redeem this war from becoming a mere dog-fight without hope of betterment for mankind. He alone has the opportunity of seeing that the great principles which have so often become catchwords are given a greater reality within the democratic States, and that they shall have behind them the power to undermine the Fascist philosophy in the territory of the enemy.

The Course of the War

An exchange of Queens is fatal policy for a chess-player with a numerical inferiority of pieces. In the Battle of the Atlantic the loss of the *Bismarck* means much more to Germany than the sinking of the *Hood* to us. Set aside the (to us) favourable political implications of a major naval engagement begun so near to American waters, forget (if you can) the deaths of thousands of brave men on both sides: the final balance-sheet, in cold terms of strength at sea, adds up all in Britain's favour.

The dramatic qualities of this naval combat, ought not to divert attention unduly from the much more significant operations centred in Crete. There a relatively small Imperial army, with the support of some Greek forces, has succeeded for over a week in resisting a combined attack by Stukas, parachutists and air-borne troops pressed with ruthless disregard of casualties. The defence has had relatively little fighter air support, so that no deductions from it in relation to an air-borne invasion of Britain can be drawn. The relevant factors are that, by methods still unexplained, the *Luftwaffe* have succeeded in exploiting for attack Greek aerodromes which we found inadequate for defence of the mainland, and that we and our Allies did not contrive, while time availed, to construct flying-fields in Crete sufficient as bases for our fighters. As matters stand, General Freyberg's force has been compelled to fight an air invasion from the ground, with the backing only of bombers and some long-range fighters from Egypt. The defence has been conducted with the greatest courage and endurance; heavy losses have been inflicted on the enemy's picked and specially trained troops (whose numbers are not inexhaustible); and, at the cost of a heavy sacrifice of British ships operating without protection from the air, the Navy has so far denied to the enemy a chance to land men or material by sea. General Wavell cannot reinforce the Cretan garrison rapidly on a grand scale; having consolidated a bridge-head round Maleme, the Germans have now succeeded in taking Canea. In a garrison limited in numbers and supplies, the factor of exhaustion, physical and material, must ultimately be felt. What we owe to the defenders of Crete is the gain of time—the more valuable each day it is prolonged.

The Rule of Law

It is a long time since a department and by implication its Minister has been the object of such scarifying criticism from the Bench as that delivered by Mr. Justice Humphreys in the High Court last Tuesday in the case of an application for a writ of *habeas corpus* by a person detained under Regulation 18B. The applicant had been arrested with 24 other people under an "omnibus" order, and it was quite clear from the judgment that this method of corralling suspects *en bloc* is open to fearful abuse. The regulations provide specific grounds for detention in the case of each individual, and in this particular example of wholesale arrest the proper precautions to secure that the grounds applied to each individual were not taken. On the contrary, the original draft of the order, which remained at the Home Office, in no way resembled the copy of the order presented to the detained person. The result was that the applicant had been detained for 11 months on a document purporting to emanate from the Home Secretary which never emanated from him, which he knew nothing about, and which he disowned. However, the judgment did not turn on this discrepancy but on something even worse. The original order itself was in several respects unsatisfactory, and entirely omitted to state one of the essential matters. The Judge was quite unable to say on the evidence that the Secretary of State had reasonable cause to believe that it was necessary to exercise control over the detained person. Here is one more example of the need for vigilance if the essentials of liberty are to be maintained in wartime. For that reason we welcome the National Council for Civil Liberties conference on the Freedom of the Press at the Central Hall, Westminster, on June 7th. The speakers include Frank Owen, Editor of the *Evening Standard*, and Ernest Hunter, who, as a former President of the N.U.J., speaks on "Censorship." A large number of delegates of national as well as local organisations will be present.

The Home Front (*From an Industrial Correspondent*)

The Labour Party Conference will be meeting in London during the coming week. As the Executive has not allowed the affiliated bodies to put forward any resolutions, it will be very difficult to discover the state of opinion in the country; for proposals to refer back sections of the report will presumably be the only method by which critics can challenge the official policies. Such proposals are not likely to succeed, in face of the strong tendency for the Trade Union block vote to be cast on the side of the platform—a tendency which is certain to be stronger than normally under the existing conditions. That there will be speeches directed against the political truce and the failure to keep local propaganda active can be taken for granted; but there is not likely to be any way of finding out how deep or widespread the dissatisfaction is. A further difficulty is, of course, that a large proportion of the party's active workers are absorbed in local emergency services and have not been giving much attention to party work, which has suffered seriously in many places. Altogether, the Conference looks like being more an opportunity for the leaders to tell the country what they are doing than for the followers to tell the leaders what they ought to do.

* * *

There is, however, apart from the question of family allowances (which is dealt with elsewhere in this issue) one practical matter on which it is to be hoped the Conference will give a clear record of its opinion. At the recent Kings Norton by-election the Divisional Labour Party, without putting forward a candidate of its own, issued a manifesto stating plainly the Labour point of view and giving its reasons for refusing to support any of the candidates—including the official Conservative. For this offence the Kings Norton Party was disciplined by exclusion from the national body. The Birmingham Borough Party, to which Kings Norton is attached, has subsequently supported the Kings Norton attitude, and is presumably now also amenable to central discipline. The question is whether the party truce compels local Labour Parties not only to refrain from putting forward candidates at by-elections for seats held by the other parties, but also to give positive support to candidates of whose views they very strongly disapprove, or at least to refrain from any expression at all of their own, and the Labour Party's, attitude. In this case there was no question at all of Kings Norton being "anti-war." On the contrary, the local party fully endorsed the official view on the war, and the main point of its manifesto was to press for its more effective prosecution. It will be interesting to see how readily the Conference accepts the Executive's view that Kings Norton's action merits expulsion from the party.

* * *

The mercantile marine is the latest branch of employment to be brought under an emergency scheme which involves pooling of labour resources as well as the calling back into the service of men who have left it during recent years. The main purpose of the new scheme is to provide reserve crews at the various ports, in order to avoid delays in using every ton of shipping that can be made available. The scheme will be managed by a series of local boards representing the shipowners and the seamen's organisations, with separate boards for officers and for men; and the State will apparently have no direct part in the administration. One by one, but very slowly, the vital sections of skilled man-power are being organised under emergency plans of one sort or another, with compulsory registration of the available labour as a basis, and the Minister of Labour's powers to order men to work where they are needed kept in the background. Trade Unions participate fully in most of these schemes, which are evidently changing the customary conditions of employment in a good many ways. One good thing that may come out of them is a recognition that the sensible course is to keep skilled labour permanently and with an assured minimum income "on the strength" of the industry to which it belongs, or in other words, to recognise payment of the "labour reserve" as one of the necessary costs of production.

* * *

Wages creep up. The miners have not secured the national minimum wage which they have been demanding; but they are to receive increases in all the coalfields, and the colliery owners are to recoup themselves by a corresponding rise in the price of coal. One feature of the increases is that they are to be paid in the form of an "attendance bonus," which will be forfeited by any miner who does not present himself for work on every day during the week when the pit is open. This form of bonus is designed to reduce absenteeism—in itself a very desirable object, for there is great need to build up the largest possible stocks of coal during the next few months. But it is to be hoped that regard will be had to the difficulties of some of the older miners who have gone back to the pits after long periods of unemployment. Many of these men find that the new working conditions introduced in recent years put a very heavy strain upon them—a strain which they simply cannot stand day in and day out month after month. It will be unfair if such men are deprived of their bonus when they absent themselves for reasons beyond their control.

The Work of the House (*By a Parliamentary Correspondent*)

At the end of questions on Tuesday the Prime Minister made a statement on the war situation, following his usual very successful technique of stating the worst at the outset and gradually developing the story so that some comfort remains at the end. On this occasion he opened the news by describing the growing strength of the Germans in Crete and with an account of our serious naval losses in Greek waters. The gloom of this part of the statement was faintly relieved when he told the House we were also reinforcing our troops in Crete. He then went on to describe the loss of the *Hood* and the steps that were being taken to sink the *Bismarck*. In his closing sentences he described the torpedoing of the *Bismarck* by our aircraft. This roused

reasonable hopes of satisfactory news to come. The House then went on to discuss the prima facie breach of privilege by the *Observer* in an article which discussed the recent Secret Session. As the Speaker rose to give his ruling the Prime Minister jumped to his feet, evidently overcome by emotion, and announced the sinking of the *Bismarck*. As he sat down he was obviously on the verge of tears. The House participated in the Prime Minister's emotion.

The report of the Select Committee on Expenditure dealing especially with the problems of civil defence was naturally the subject of eager discussion in the lobbies. Its criticisms of the Government carry the weight of an all-Party Committee with full access to the facts at a time when the Party system in the House no longer functions and when the individual Member cannot hope to command great attention. The Select Committee, in a word, is becoming the substitute for an organised Opposition, and its findings give an authoritative basis for the criticisms of outspoken individuals in the House. One of these critics, Mr. Clement Davies, made good use of the opportunity offered in the debate on the Second Reading of the Finance Bill. Unfortunately it was delivered to sparsely occupied benches. Clement Davies has always shown a realistic appreciation of the tremendous task confronting this country in the war. In the early days he was the mainspring of the All-Party Ginger Group, which played a vital part in unseating Neville Chamberlain from the saddle. For his attacks upon the Chamberlain administration Davies has never been forgiven by the Tory " yes men."

In this speech, taking as his text that the Budget and the Finance Bill provide the measure of the nation's war effort as a whole, he showed how Germany, by her conquests, had built up her economic strength for waging war. In the last quarter of last year Germany's war expenditure was running at the rate of £5,500 million to £6,000 million a year, while we were planning a war expenditure at home of only £3,500 million on the current year. If Dominion and American help are included we may reach £5,150 million this year. Will the ships be available to transfer to and land the goods in this country where we need them? Obviously we must increase our food production at home and adopt a policy of complete rationing for all goods required for civilian consumption.

The next speaker was Wardlaw Milne, who occupies an unusual position in the House. He is chairman of the Select Committee on Government Expenditure and many back-bench Tories look to him for leadership. The peroration to his speech was significant:

> " Immense sums," he said, " have to be raised, and the question is, can they be raised by ordinary methods at all? That is the real problem facing the Chancellor. To finance the war we must maintain the value of sterling by controlling inflation as far as we possibly can. We can only do that by rationing far more strictly than at present, and by a wage policy which, whatever it may do in the way of providing good wages—and nobody is against that—will prevent inequalities the result of which will destroy our own policy. I am very much afraid, from what I see of Government factories, that much effort is still wanted throughout the country to win this war. If I were asked to make a statement or to make a guess, as to the extent to which the country is behind the war, I should say that psychologically it is 100 per cent. behind it. But in regard to working for victory it is not yet a 100 per cent. effort. It is nothing like it, and I should say that this country to-day is not working more than 75 per cent. of the extent to which it ought to work. Something is needed from the Government to bring about the extra effort required—not only the control of expenditure, which is essential, and a real cutting down of personal and Government waste. That is essential, but behind that there should be a policy which insists that every man and woman should do their utmost by compulsion if necessary, while all that they may expect in return is sufficient to enable them to carry on until the day of victory."

No wonder that the more informed Members of the House (of all parties) ask how many more defeats are needed before this country faces the issues realistically and not romantically. We are well on the way to a financial revolution. Some very drastic change must occur in the Government if we are to get even within sight of meeting Nazi aggression effectively. The vested interests in Government must at some point relax their grip. Churchill's position as Prime Minister is in no way dependent upon their support, although his position as Tory Leader may well be.

Will this revolutionary change in British administration take place in time? That is the question which dominates the minds of some members, many of whom are strong supporters of the Prime Minister personally.

On Tuesday Mr. Churchill announced that it was not, after all, intended to enforce conscription in Northern Ireland. The decision is wise. But why, in the name of commonsense, was so obvious a method of creating a Fifth Column and so futile a method of trying to raise man-power even suggested?

CENSORSHIP REGULATIONS allow only the publisher or newsagent with a permit to post printed matter to certain countries. Readers are free to post to any part of the British Empire (excepting Eire and Northern Ireland) and to any country of the American Continent (excepting dependencies of enemy-occupied countries) but are advised to consult a Post Office or a newsagent before attempting to post elsewhere.

POSTAGE on this issue is: Inland, 1½d.; Foreign, 1d.; Canada, 1d.

THE TRAGEDY OF FRANCE

ENGLISHMEN, in the tightest corner they have ever known, find it difficult to take a dispassionate view of France, a year ago their ally and to-day acting as the tool of Germany. Yet it is essential that we should understand; that we should differentiate between Frenchmen who are voluntarily the servants of Hitler and those who perforce conform to Nazi dictation while maintaining an inner resistance. It is necessary because we must avoid tragic blunders of policy in regard to Frenchmen who must be our friends in the future, and because the disasters which happened to France are not impossible here, if we drift into the same mood and commit the same mistakes.

Every community, whether the nation itself or a voluntary society within the nation, lives by its own informing principle. To survive, its members must have a conception of its function and place in the society of mankind. When a political party, which claims to embody the Conservative tradition flouts the constitution it is pledged to maintain and seeks to secure the propertied position of its members by an alliance with Fascism, it passes sentence of death on itself. When a Socialist party, forced to ally itself with its opponents to meet a common danger, falls to fighting within itself, it forfeits the support of the workers it represents. If the rulers of a nation like France, which has stood for a progressive tradition of intellectual and political freedom, prefer an easy life and the advantages of a corrupt system to the development of the principles they had proclaimed to the world, it cuts away the very roots of national existence. France could have suffered defeat and still been a mighty force in the world; even in subjection her rational philosophy and her tradition of individual liberty could still be a menace to the Nazi cult of instinctive violence and racial domination. The shame we feel for France to-day is not that she was defeated, but that her rulers, who pledged themselves not to aid the Nazis against Britain, have in fact made themselves Hitler's allies and are aiding the design, declared by Dr. Goebbels, of destroying all " the principles of 1789." We see French decadence, not in the rout of the French army overwhelmed by dive bombers and Panzer divisions, but in their rulers' game of pretending neutrality until Hitler was ready to use their services in Syria and North Africa; in such actions as the surrender to Himmler of German Social Democrats who had been welcomed in France as allies in the struggle against Nazism, and in the betrayal of the brave men who fought France's battle in Spain and who were left to rot in neglected camps and who are now dead or working as convicts for Fascist masters. Such actions as these are the real decadence—the marks not of defeat, but of dishonour.

A nation does not suddenly fall to pieces because its armies are defeated on the battlefield; the downfall of France began not in this war but after the last war. In 1919 the vitality and virility of France were terribly exhausted and the policy of her rulers was a reflection of that exhaustion. When France built the Maginot Line she gave notice to the world that she never meant to fight again, that she had abandoned her ambitions and accepted the role of a peaceful agricultural country anxious only to cultivate its own garden. But the French were not contented with this rational if unheroic part. At the same time they attempted to dominate Europe by a system of Continental alliances; as long as they could do so without risk, they bullied defeated Germany, invaded her territory and attempted to live on the spoils they could extract from her. Liberty and equality, once ideas that set the world aflame, became mere catchwords; the comfortable inheritors of the French Revolution were terrified of permitting the principles of 1789 to be translated into social action for the benefit of those who were not comfortable. Fraternity, which once meant the co-operation of democracies, was abandoned for a short-sighted selfishness. As long as the French bourgeosie were comfortable, what did it matter that ugly deeds and brutal doctrines took root in neighbouring countries? If France wore a laurel wreath, did she not deserve to sleep? The test came with the Spanish War. If the French bourgeosie could make themselves believe that it was no concern of theirs when a democratic government in Spain was challenged by a Fascist rising, sponsored by Mussolini and Hitler, then indeed they were doomed. If they were too fearful of their own working class and of a threat to their own position to take sides in the critical issue of the century, they could not hope to safeguard their own national security. Flandin spoke for his class when he said that he preferred Hitler's victory to the triumph of the Paris Reds. Too late he discovered, like other French business men who hoped to do a deal with the Nazis, that Hitler plans to cut France into pieces and use for the exclusive benefit of Germany the industries and mineral wealth they sought to save for themselves. Such men, who could see nothing in the aspirations of working people to share

in the French tradition except a conspiracy against their own comfort, were the worst enemies of France. When war came no principle was left to die for. Once the principle that had bound France together was abandoned, nothing was left except the individuals who in unity once made the French nation.

As an individual it was easier for a French officer to abandon his men in face of the enemy; as an individual it paid a French politician to content himself with locking up Communists and refugees, to declare that all was over and to make peace with Hitler as quickly as possible. As individuals and without leaders in which they could trust, the soldiers who had made up the best army in Europe, readily believed the stories spread by German propaganda that Britain had left them in the lurch, and it was safer to run away rather than to attempt to stop Germany's mechanised columns. With no principle to inspire them, why should civilians not become refugees and crowd the roads as Hitler's legions advanced? So France disintegrated.

Reviewing this story it is as foolish as it is easy to select one group as solely to blame. We all know about the Fifth Column, the Lavals and Bonnets and Flandins who, from anti-Bolshevism or for bribes or for the hope of a little power, were willing to serve Hitler. It is equally simple to point to the disastrous tactics of the Communists who split the working-class ranks at the crisis of the anti-Fascist struggle. But French Social Democrats have also their share of responsibility. Their reasonable and justified fear of war, particularly on behalf of untrustworthy and incompetent leaders, was only one factor in the situation. But the pass had really been sold during the Spanish War. If M. Blum and the leaders of the Popular Front had dared to stand up to the Two Hundred Families and the covert friends of Fascism in the critical days of non-intervention in Spain, there would have been a party in France which common men would have trusted. France would not have disintegrated because there would have been leaders who, even in defeat, would have been respected and who would have carried on the struggle for the principles they professed. The weakness and corruption of the rulers of France was the opportunity of the party of progress. They had long prophesied the collapse of French capitalism; they were not prepared for the danger and responsibility of the situation its failure presented to them.

None of this can happen here? Fortunately conditions are different. The ruling class in Britain has at least seen, under Mr. Churchill's guidance, that it has nothing to gain by listening to Hitler's professions of friendship. The bourgeoisie of Britain is tougher and the workers less disillusioned. The Imperial tradition is stronger in England than it was in France; the Channel is less easy to by-pass than the Maginot Line and Britain has a leader of better fibre than Daladier or Reynaud. But there are other factors which are disturbingly similar to those in France. Like France Britain since the last war has been ruled by men who were unable to meet the challenge of their epoch. Like the French ruling class they could not conceive that it might be wise to give a wider interpretation to the great phrases which had inspired the heroic days of the British middle-class. If they were not corrupt as the politicians of France they were not more far-sighted. If the Civil Service did not take bribes it was no more ready than the French to adjust its mind to the needs of war. If the British ruling class was more ready to make concessions to the workers it was even less capable of conceiving a philosophy that was not insular and selfish. If it was willing to accept in principle the idea of self-determination to subject peoples, it could not rise even to the height of accepting the offer of India's leaders to collaborate in the struggle against Fascism. Because its outlook was narrow and nationalistic and class-ridden, it could nowhere appeal to the forces that were threatened by Fascism, but vainly sought allies in a Mussolini, a Franco, in Arab landlords and in any and every group except those who were, by necessity, anti-Fascist. More disturbing to-day is the comparison between French and British Social Democrats. Last year, at the most critical moment of the war, the leaders of Labour joined forces with the Churchillian Tories. They helped to see the country through the perils of last summer and autumn. They have won respect as departmental chiefs. But as Labour leaders they have lost their meaning. At the Whitsun Conference they can point to many instances in which their presence in the Government has benefited the rank and file of workers. But they are missing a vast opportunity. It is true that it would be folly to demand party advantage during the war, but immense changes in the social structure of England are occurring during the war, and Mr. Churchill, absorbed in the problems of war strategy and hampered by his position as Chairman of the Conservative Party, has left to the Labour leaders the chief responsibility for home policy. We believe that their failure to take this opportunity is due in part to an honest misunderstanding of the mood of this country. "Equality of sacrifice" promised for the war is now not merely a Labour demand; it is a general aspiration. There are, of course, employers who fear its implications and comfortable people who still hope to escape the realities of the war in secluded, well-upholstered corners. But there are hundreds of thousands of shopkeepers and clerks and small men who have no interest in party politics but who demand social changes that they would have termed Bolshevism two years ago. The leaders of Labour are unnecessarily timorous; they run no risk of undermining British unity if they insist that all must share equally in a state of siege, that the resources of the country must belong to and be utilised by the people of the country and that privilege must be sacrificed to the public interest. They use words of this kind in the manifestoes they present to the Whitsuntide Conference, but if they are to hold the loyalty of their supporters, build for themselves an impregnable position as national leaders and save this country from the perils of disunity they will translate their words into bolder actions.

THE STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF THE GOVERNMENT

ANYONE who looks back on the Chamberlain epoch is bound to place Mr. Churchill among the great English statesmen. He embodies, as not even Mr. Lloyd George embodied, the will of the nation to live; he has drive and energy and audacity. He has caught the imagination, and held the loyalty of the people, in a pre-eminent way.

But Mr. Churchill's immense qualities ought not to blind us either to his own grave defects or to the obvious weaknesses of his Government. He is interested, intellectually as well as emotionally, in the strategy of the war; he has an emotional interest merely in its domestic impact. So that whatever in its conduct does not convince him of its urgent strategic relevance is unseen or pushed on one side. The pathos of the bombed areas makes him demand instant action. But the inadequacies of the policies of his Government in education, for instance, or evacuation, do not arrest his interest, and nothing proportionate to their importance is attempted. He retains all his blindness on India. He does not even begin to understand the gravity of his colleagues' failure to grapple with the problems of production. The patent weaknesses of the Foreign Office, the absence, after nearly two years, of any coherent purpose in our propaganda, do not impinge upon his attention. Wherever his interest is interstitial, either the problems are half tackled, or they are not tackled at all. Mr. Churchill remains a very great war leader. It is not, as yet, clear that he is in any sense a great Prime Minister.

That weakness is, I think, due to three things. It is, in part, the fault of Mr. Churchill's own temperament; it is in part the fault of colleagues who remain subordinates in every vital aspect of the task; and it is in part the fault of the relationship he has built with the House of Commons. Each of these deserves a separate discussion.

Mr. Churchill is one of the great talkers of our time, in private discussion not less than in public debate. But, like most great talkers, he does not find it easy to listen; still less does he find it easy to discuss those themes which, because their margins are open to doubt and uncertainty, do not lend themselves easily to thunderous improvisation. More than this. Though Mr. Churchill will listen when the compulsion is unavoidable, he is more often concerned with the answer to his critic than he is with the substance of his critic's argument. So that where he is blind, as over India, or basically uninterested, as in the problems of industrial organisation, he finds it difficult to reorientate his mind to a world wholly different from what it was when he was forming his basic outlook. Where he is interested, he can still learn; but unless he is interested his inherent tendency is to be unsympathetic to a point of view he has not learned to share.

Mr. Churchill, moreover, is an intensely loyal person, above all to those who have stood by him in the difficult days of his career. The result is that he is, compared to the needs of his position, comparatively a poor judge of men. He tends to think either that the loyal man is a fine fellow, with whom he ought not to part, or that the man who chose, with him, the more difficult road has the kind of courage that the hour requires. And when men adapt themselves to his own outlook—there has never been a Prime Minister who would not pretty easily find that adaptability in his entourage—he tends to think that they are men who have grasped the essence of the problem. He is far too prone to mistake acceptance of his own views for an understanding of the issue. If a colleague is critical of Mr.

Nehru's attitude, Mr. Churchill assumes that he has mastered the problem of India.

And this approach is related to the stature of his colleagues. When Lord Halifax left for the United States there was one member of the War Cabinet left—Mr. Bevin—who was willing freely to speak his mind. The rest were either so morally subjugated to the Prime Minister that they accepted his views as inspired, or they were so buried in departmental detail that they were silent through ignorance where a critical examination of his hypotheses was called for. No Cabinet ever works well where the Prime Minister utterly overshadows his colleagues. Someone there ought always to be who doubts with energy and determination. Save in the narrow sphere that Mr. Bevin traverses, there is no such person in this Government. It is Mr. Churchill and a body of subordinates who do little else but accept the decisions he makes. There is no one who compels him to take an interest in those matters which he either deems unimportant or approaches with the rigidities of his past. Even the Labour Ministers have been utterly unable to make him grasp, on the economic side, the revolutionary character of the changes produced by the war.

The Prime Minister needs new blood about him, in his Cabinet not less than in his private entourage. He has too few colleagues who compel him to think out first first principles; he has no subordinate who can so put a problem to him that he sees it in a perspective that he has not himself supplied. Even where he meets the outsider, he does not meet him on equal terms. He talks so well that they listen where they should speak; and he improvises profound convictions so brilliantly that they are stricken into silence by the desire to entrust to their memories what they ought to drive him to defend. The result is that he gives only half his mind to the problems which have not caught his imagination, or his whole mind only for too brief intervals. No colleague has that persistence which doggedly keeps at Mr. Churchill until he is pricked into the urgency of new thought.

The Prime Minister is a very great parliamentarian, and he and the House of Commons have a mutual affection and respect. But he suffers from the absence of a coherent Opposition there. He knows not only that he is pretty certain to emerge with credit in the debate, but that none of his critics can hope to muster a respectable following in the Lobby. The result is twofold. On the one hand, it means that he treats his critics with a certain cavalier impatience; there is not behind them that solidity of numbers which compels attention to the substance of argument. On the other hand, his very impatience with his critics tends to dishearten their effort. They are not made to feel that their work is welcome, and the result is that they do not make the impact which is often inherent in the quality of their attack. Or they are so eager to emphasise their loyalty to the Government that they discount beforehand half of what they seek to achieve. The House of Commons is still invaluable as a place where the details of administration may be scrutinised by inquiry; its debates, especially now that Mr. Churchill has become so prone to the evil habit of secret sessions, have mostly ceased to influence the policy of the Government. The impact of outside opinion is far greater than that of inside opinion. Ministers generally, and Mr. Churchill in particular, hardly hear in an effective way the considered judgment of the House of Commons. And, on the critical occasion, Mr. Churchill is so skilled in the manipulation of the instrument he has to control that the real issues are never met.

To some extent this is the fault of the Parliamentary Labour Party and its leaders. The latter are so obsessed by the idea that coalition government is a compromise that they equate the criticism they receive with disloyalty instead of accepting it as a spur to further exertion. Its individual members know full well that there is a mass of questions—our diplomacy, the treatment of evacuees, the condition of education, the lag in war production, the refusal to define war aims—on which public opinion is restless and uneasy. But instead of driving home their knowledge, they discuss it half-guiltily with one another lest its too public utterance embarrass their leaders. Mr. Shinwell is the most notable of a small number of exceptions to this rule; but he has diminished his hold on the party (though he has increased his stature in the country) by ventilating his doubts. Half the Labour Party is appalled at our bankruptcy in Indian policy; but its speakers never produce the impression that they are determined something should be done. Probably more than half are profoundly shocked by the futility of most of our propaganda; but they never push their criticism so far that Mr. Churchill is led to give half an hour to looking into the condition of the Ministry of Information.

They do not want to embarrass their Ministerial colleagues, so their Ministerial colleagues do not need to trouble the Prime Minister. The result is that the House of Commons does not drive Mr. Churchill, as it is there to drive him, into the examination of issues which clamour for his attention. He is never compelled to see the war in its whole perspective. He knows the greatness of the nation's confidence in him; he is unaware of the doubts it has about many of his policies and about some of his colleagues. To none does the task of giving him this awareness more fitly fall than to the Labour Ministers. But if their colleagues in the House let them off so lightly, it is not surprising that the task is unfulfilled. And while it is unfulfilled, the emphasis of the Prime Minister's mind is unlikely to be distributed over the problems he ought to be examining in its due proportions.

All this has the more importance for a very simple reason. Under cover of safeguarding the national unity, and "getting on with the war," problem after problem is left out from consideration, examination of which is often central to the war effort itself, and sometimes fundamental to the hope of creative reconstruction. The situation, naturally enough, suits those admirably who want to win the war with the minimum of change; and it suits the Prime Minister because it does not compel him to come to grips with the reactionary elements in his party. That day is bound to come; but, for him, every day of its postponement seems, as he looks at his time-table, a day gained. In fact, of course, it is a day lost of that temper the country over which has been taught by the drama of war to expect great social and economic changes; to that extent it is a loss of goodwill which it will be difficult to make up. The postponement has the further disadvantage that the failure to tackle these issues now only adds to their complexity. The pretext that coalition government must be a compromise of principle piles up a *dammosa hereditas* for the post-war period. Things could be done by consent to-day which will raise passionate controversy when peace comes. This is a grave failure to use the state of the national temper; and the responsibility for it lies partly in Mr. Churchill's temperament, and partly in the relationship upon which his Government has based itself. Our memory of the great things it has accomplished ought not to blind us to the great opportunities it has failed to use.

Mr. Churchill, in fact, while probably the greatest War Minister this country has known since Chatham, has not yet shown that he is a great Prime Minister, still less that he is the right man for the peace. It is, of course, a supreme achievement to have held the spirit of the nation erect, as he has held it, in this devastating year; and to have gone so far in preparing its people for the endurance that victory will require. It still remains difficult to believe that Mr. Churchill has yet understood what is meant by the dynamic of democracy. He is making a revolution for which he has not yet discovered the principles of action. If his Labour colleagues would bend their energies to his instruction, with his remarkable gifts they could make him a supreme figure in our history. They could, also, thereby give new hope to the democratic peoples all over the world. HAROLD J. LASKI

FIVE SHILLINGS A CHILD

IT would cost between £85 and £90 millions to pay an allowance of 5s. a week for every child from birth to the time of leaving school. The gross cost would be considerably larger—about £127 millions; but about £40 millions is already being paid in children's allowances to men serving with the Forces or out of work, and in income tax allowances. The merging of these grants in a general scheme would bring down the net cost to about £90 millions at most.

These figures are given in the report of the Labour Party Executive to the party conference which is to meet at Whitsuntide. But the Executive brings forward no definite proposal that the system of children's allowances shall be introduced. Why not? Apparently because, though the Executive itself favours the proposal, the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, after debating it, has "adjourned consideration of the subject *sine die*."

An old story—for the Trade Union movement has been discussing family allowances for many years without being able to make up its mind. There are keen advocates of the system among Trade Unionists, especially in the ranks of the miners; and clearly the proposal could never have been adopted by the Labour Party Executive, which have a large Trade Union majority, without a good deal of Trade Unionist support. But there are also strong opponents among Trade Union leaders, as well as many who, without opposing outright, are sceptical and inclined to evade the necessity of making up their minds.

Trade Union criticism of family allowances rests mainly on fears of the effect they would have on wage-rates and collective bargaining. The wage system, resting on the principle of payment for work done, either by time or by piece, naturally takes no account of family

responsibilities. In the phrase of the economists, it is designed, in the absence of monopoly, to reward labour according to the principle of "marginal net productivity." On this basis Trade Unions negotiate with employers and employers' associations, save where the existence of monopoly on either side alters the terms of the wage-bargain in the interests of one party against the other, or sometimes of both at the expense of the rest of the community. Trade Union leaders are used to bargaining on this principle: it is their regular job. The idea of paying workers partly on a different basis, unrelated to the character or productivity of their work, strikes them as "dangerous"; for may it not upset all the wage-bargains at which they have arrived after long years of arduous struggle?

These fears have some substance when the payment of family allowances takes the form—common on the Continent—of a sum paid by the individual employer, or by a group of employers acting through some sort of pool. There is then the danger that an employer or group may discriminate in employment in favour of workers without dependents—e.g. by employing women as against men; but much more serious is the danger that the allowance may be treated as a bonus paid at the employer's discretion, and withheld in face of what the employer may regard as "misbehaviour." But these objections clearly do not apply to any system of family allowances paid to everybody under a State scheme, and financed either wholly out of general taxation or in the same way as the existing contributory insurances, partly by the State and partly by employers' and workers' contributions.

Trade Union fears of family allowances in this latter form rest on a different foundation. There is first the suspicion that, in times of rising prices, they may be used as a cheap substitute for wage advances—at the cost of lowering the real wages of those who are not in a position to benefit by them. There is undoubtedly substance in this criticism under normal conditions; but as matters stand to-day there are further relevant factors. All-round advances in wages, sufficient to meet rising prices generally, are impracticable under present conditions; any attempt to concede them would defeat itself by causing further price increases and so starting a vicious spiral. This being undesirable, there is a great need for some way of making up the incomes of those heads of households who are not in a position to earn high wages; and a system of family allowances is the only available way of doing this, unless a host of applicants is to be referred to the Assistance Board, and the powers of the Board again enlarged.

Secondly, the Trade Unions, or some of them, suspect that employers will make the institution of family allowances an excuse for reducing wages, on the plea that it is no longer necessary to pay wages at rates high enough to support an "average family." This argument rests, however, on a misunderstanding of the nature of the wage-bargain. Employers pay the wages they do pay, not because they are needed for the maintenance of the household, but because, under the prevailing economic system, such and such wage-levels are determined by the relative bargaining strength of the parties. Now, it could not by any possibility reduce the workers' bargaining strength to have 5*s*. a week for each child added to the family income, whether a man is at work, or unemployed, or on strike. On the contrary, the workmen's power could not fail to be substantially reinforced by such an assured addition to income; and there is no reason at all to believe that the employers would be able to reduce wages as a result of it. At least, there is no reason unless the sums needed to pay the family allowances are to be levied on the employers in the form of a business cost—in which case they might reduce the "net productivity" of labour. This argument, however, has no applicability in relation to any system of family allowances financed out of general taxation; and this is clearly the method by which they ought to be financed.

The truth is that the specifically Trade Union arguments against a State-financed plan of allowances, such as the Labour Party Executive proposed, rest not on clear thinking but on prejudice. They are not unlike the opposition which many Trade Union leaders used to put up against a legal minimum wage, or even, at an earlier stage, against a legal limitation of the hours of labour. There is in them an element of fear that the more the State does for the workers the less will the workers see the need for loyalty to the Trade Unions, even though in the absence of the Unions the safeguards provided by the State would in many cases prove illusory. Each Trade Union is primarily a body for looking after the industrial interests of a limited group of workers; and, as the worst-off sections of the working classes can least afford to pay Trade Union contributions, Trade Union opinion is apt in practice to be somewhat neglectful of the interests of the poorest households.

The Labour Party, on the other hand, has to appeal to a wider constituency, and must take the unorganised as well as the organised into account. Before the war, Labour Party, as distinct from Trade Union, opinion was divided on the question of family allowances because it seemed necessary to choose between spending in this way the necessarily limited sum available for social reform, and spending it on other services, such as free school meals, higher pensions, and improved social services generally. Differences of view in this matter were perfectly natural and legitimate; and there was no possible way of *proving* which opinion was right. But war has altered the situation. There is now no possibility of developing many of the social services, such as education; and it is evident that rising costs of living involve very special hardships for the members of large families, above all when they are employed in occupations in which earnings have not been swollen by the war. Unless we are to have a general system of communal feeding, *plus* rationing of all other necessaries at low controlled prices, the larger households are bound to suffer; and a cash addition to incomes is much the easiest way of meeting the hardship. If the soldier gets a family allowance, why in wartime should not the civilian get one too?

The Trades Union Congress General Council, however, cannot make up its mind; and in such matters the Labour Party usually takes action only after securing agreement with the Congress. It is to be hoped that, on this occasion, it will not allow itself to be deterred, and that opportunity will be given this coming week for a resolution at the Party Conference endorsing the Executive's scheme and urging the Party, both in Parliament and elsewhere, to press it forward by every possible means. A scheme beginning with the second, or even the third, child—which would be a great deal cheaper—would be very much better than no scheme at all, but would involve more complications, as it would not make possible a complete merging of the allowances now paid to soldiers, to the unemployed, and to the payers of income tax. On the whole, the case is strongest for a perfectly simple scheme, financed wholly out of public funds and granting payment at a flat rate for every child in the country.

It is the more important that the Labour Party Conference should take a firm stand on this issue because it is now so widely believed that Labour Party policy tends in economic matters merely to echo the will of the leaders of the big Trade Unions. In this case the Labour Party is in an excellent position for taking a stand, not against the Trade Unions or their leaders, but on behalf of that wider working-class public of which the Trade Unions represent only a part. Many Trade Union leaders, and probably very many Trade Union members, are keen supporters of family allowances. The Trade Union movement is not opposed to them: it is only divided, and anxious to avoid pronouncing a collective opinion. If the Labour Party decides to act, it need not fear that there will be a consensus of Trade Unions in opposition. On the contrary, even the Trade Union leaders who have opposed family allowances will probably be quite pleased to have the decision taken out of their hands.

It is, of course, another matter whether a Labour Party decision in favour of family allowances will ensure the speedy enactment of the legislation needed to bring them into effect. But an emphatic pronouncement by the representatives of the local parties represented at the Conference could not fail to carry very great weight. The Labour Ministers in the Government could beyond a peradventure carry family allowances if they gave their full adhesion; for there is a large measure of support in other parties, and no very strong opposition, beyond the customary resistance to any proposal which involves redistributive expenditure out of public funds for the benefit of the poorer parts of the community. £85 to £90 millions, which would have seemed a vast sum only a few years ago, no longer looks very formidable, especially when it is clear that the alternative must be to expend a not much smaller (perhaps even a much larger) sum in other ways. The arguments in favour of family allowances were strong, but not overwhelming in times of peace: they appear to me to be unanswerable under the conditions of war.

A LONDON DIARY

"What's his name?" "Fudge." I did not ask whether it was his name by baptism or adoption. I was too interested in his personality. He was so very much smaller than the shovel he was using and so solemn about it. His overcoat came to his ankles and he wore a huge muffler. His hair was the colour of tow and he said nothing as he laboriously pushed stones and bits of wood and potato peelings along the ground. I wish I knew what he and the other boys who worked with us thought about this new kind of life. No school, but much to learn from bombs and rationing and bonfires of rubbish;

no outlook except a devastated area that looked rather like Ypres in 1917. They had come back from the country with their mothers to find the large block of modern flats that had once been the promising beginning of a slum clearance scheme still standing upright, though the windows were smashed and not another house in sight is habitable. The slum clearance is almost complete in that area; meanwhile these people had to live in the devastation. Where there had been gardens, stones and rubbish and the trampling of heavy boots made a dirty stretch of yard. The little sheds for perambulators and stores were all blown in and the mess of rag, old mattresses and broken furniture made a good bonfire. We had brought large brooms with us—very useful objects to carry in the tube if there is a crush—and the place looked much cleaner by the time the rubbish was sorted out and the worst of it burnt and the carpenter had mended the doors with old pieces of wood. The boys came out of the flats to help. They enjoyed the bonfire and if they don't get killed in the next raids they may grow up more adjusted to the new kind of life than their parents are. Like being born, instead of merely wrecked, on a desert island. Not that their fathers and mothers were letting things be. They were trying, for instance, to make gardens again. One man (who explained that he knew little of gardening) had dug up his patch with a pick-axe and planted bits of lilac blossom in the ground. Most of it he had planted with potatoes. The ground was only dust, fine and natureless, like sand. Neither the lilac nor the potatoes will grow. What would? Marigolds, I think, and perhaps nasturtiums. They will be less useful than the potatoes, but also less disappointing.

* * *

The Government turned down the suggestion to propose a limitation of the international bombing match. I stick to my view that the tactics employed in the threat to bomb Rome if Athens and Cairo were bombed was a welcome mark of sanity. It ought not to be impossible to convince people that as their power to inflict damage becomes greater so their power to check indiscriminate destruction on both sides may also be increased. The problem is admittedly difficult. The bombing of invasion ports, factories and military objectives (especially oil stores and refineries) is Britain's most powerful and necessary weapon of defence, and it involves, of course, a number of civilian casualties. But there have been reliable reports of the accuracy of British bombing when the targets were purely military; there have been occasions when people in occupied countries have managed to show that they welcomed British bombers who concentrated on such targets even when these were close to centres of French or Dutch civilian life. I believe that we have everything to gain and nothing to lose by a proposal that both sides should refrain from the bombing of open towns. It is noticeable that the demand for reprisal bombing has mainly come from unbombed areas. Even so, the redoubtable Pemberton Billing (what memories of the comedy of the Black Book and of the savage final period of the last war that name recalls!) won negligible support as a "Bomb Berlin" candidate.

* * *

Britain's chance of surviving the Nazi siege depends almost as much on the sailors of Norway, Holland, Belgium, Greece, China and other countries as on the British Merchant Marine itself. Everything would be done, one would have thought, to make much of these sailors, to give them the sense of our gratitude and a welcome on these shores. My information from several people, the most important of whom has sailed on Norwegian and Belgian as well as British ships, is that the authorities do a great deal to alienate the friendship of these sailors. I know well the difficulty. Foreign sailors provide a channel which the enemy is certain to attempt to use for espionage work. But I cannot believe that they need be subjected to so much restriction and such irritating examinations. If a ship docks in the evening an alien sailor is not allowed to leave it, or even to set foot on the dock until after the authorities have examined him next morning, though British sailors can go ashore at once. This applies even to those whose home is in the port and who may have been previously examined repeatedly by the same authorities. When vessels move regularly between two or more British ports these men are not given any form of pass, but go through the same form of examination at every visit. Sometimes the questions include enquiries about how tall they are and other items already on their passports, whether they have false teeth, and similar futilities. In other ports the object seems to be to consider their political opinions and they are interrogated as if they were spies or enemy aliens. It appears to be always a long examination and I have some evidence that it has an extremely discouraging effect and greatly damps the enthusiasm for the British cause. "We risk our lives for you," they say, "and then you treat us like this."

How deliberate Vichy's surrender has been may be judged from the fact that last week even the British Right-Wing Catholic Weekly, the *Tablet*, lamented that those pillars of Europe's Catholicism, the Italian Royal House of Savoy and the Vichy Government, had apparently found neither the Nazi-Soviet pact nor the Nazis' Polish atrocities a bar to profitable "collaboration" with the Hitler *Reich*. Of Marshal Pétain, the journal now goes so far as to say that he is misusing language when speaking of honour. About Moslem honour, however, the *Tablet* retains its sensitiveness. The writer of a recent NEW STATESMAN AND NATION article "The Mysteries of Arabia" is rebuked for misrepresenting the *Tablet's* faith (three weeks ago) in Rashid Ali and a "grossly offensive reference" to a trusted and valuable ally, the Emir of Transjordan, by describing him as "an amiable nonentity on the British payroll." Our Correspondent answers:

> My words, I hope, were as inoffensive as the Emir. Nonentity? Already Lawrence saw Feysal's younger brother Abdullah as no soldier nor statesman. Amiable? The Emir was most amiable when I last lunched with him in the company of a French engineer who looked after his plantations. On the British payroll? Who else but the British Exchequer supports Transjordan? I can only repeat that the *Tablet's* faith that Arab anti-Bolshevism would keep Rashid Ali pro-British and anti-German was both fatuous and part of the harmful effort of certain circles to pretend that this life-and-death struggle with Nazism is really quite another, imaginary war in which Britain, Franco's Spain and God-fearing Arabs were lined up together against Bolshevik atheism. . . .

In this sense, the last issue of the *Tablet* which succeeds in linking Rashid Ali with the International Brigade, is certainly a museum piece. Starting with its denunciation of this journal, the greater part of its political notes is devoted to the danger in Iraq, not of the Nazi planes which have landed with Vichy connivance, but of—Bolshevism! The typical Nazi rumour that Soviet airmen are serving in Iraq is eagerly seized upon:

> In effect, it seems, the International Brigades are to be revived in a new rôle. There have been many reports lately of the welcome given to Spanish and other members of the International Brigades on their arrival in Russia. Spain will be interested to hear that they are to be used again in a new rôle, and as a reprisal for the assistance sent to Finland, to which Nationalist Spain contributed generously.

After this revelation, it would not surprise one if the *Tablet* discovered that Rashid Ali was really Tom Wintringham in disguise.

* * *

For my part I was lucky and found a bed, but my friend had to shake down on the sofa, and there were stories of people taking refuge for the night in the police station, for all the world as if Oxford were Blackpool in Wakes week. The streets are crowded to the point of congestion by representatives of the following: (1) the indigenous population, some 80,000 in number, (2) the workers from the industrial suburbs of Cowley and Headington, who used to make cars which killed the English on the roads and now make —— which kill Germans on the seas and in the air. ("Say," said the American visitor to the policeman directing the traffic at Carfax, "what's this thriving industrial Burg?") (3) The country people who flock into the town at all times but especially on a Saturday afternoon, Oxford being a country town, a market and a centre of bus routes which radiate into the countryside in every direction. This is a thriving countryside just now and people have money to spend. (4) The evacuees and refugees from London, together with an army of business men who are paying £6 or even £8 a week for a maisonette in which to park their families while they themselves pack the London trains. (5) Members of the Forces. (6) Many Civil Servants. (7) The Slade School. (8) Every conceivable school, college, crèche or educational what-not in the country. (9) The University. Down the streets there thunders an incessant stream of traffic. The pavements on Saturdays are a solid and almost stationary wad of people—the Cher on Sundays an almost solid mass of stationary punts. There are bus queues, food queues and cigarette queues. The evacuees and refugees get their own back for being fleeced by taking advantage of their many unoccupied hours to get round first to the shops which are known to have food and cigarettes to sell. The dentist told me that he worked from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and then couldn't see all his patients. Queues form outside the George Restaurant before every meal. Why there are not more restaurants is a standing mystery. Why is there no Communal Feeding Centre? Somewhere, submerged beneath all this mêlée, the University is to be found. It is even reported to be doing some work.

* * *

Last words on Hess: "Never was so much concealed from so many by so few."

CRITIC

RUBÁIYÁT

Now the new season brings the tourist trade,
From Cairo to Tehran behold displayed
The arts and crafts of all the Middle East
Bold old and new and partially decayed.

Inonue in the Istanbul bazaar
Vends unrepeatable *objets d'art*,
And Rashid Ali cries his Bagdad wares,
Echoed by Abdul Illah from afar.

In Egypt's booths no price is held too high
For genuine Faroukian papyri,
And lo! beside the oil-jars of Iran
Hear Reza Shah Pahlevi call "Come buy!"

And those who come with sacks of minted gold
To bargain in the market-place, behold,
That which they purchased was already bought
And nothing, but the buyer, has been sold.

The more the merchants are sold out, the more
They sell without diminishing their store,
The selfsame articles will be on view
To-morrow as they were the day before.

Red Turkey carpet, stale Rahat Lakoum,
The flowers of friendship, slightly past their bloom,
Seals, talismans and old Arabian tales
Sold and re-sold—the question is, to whom?

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to R. A. Donaldson.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

"ALCOHOL CAUSE OF FRANCE'S DOWNFALL"

He told how France was defeated "because of the national craving for strong drink. Alcohol is definitely the cause of France's defeat," he said, "and it will prolong this war if we in England do not see to it that the craving for drink is crushed."—Secretary of the National Temperance Federation, reported in the *Northern Echo*.

Fear is something which animal lovers hate to see in their dumb friends. British pets have guts, like their owners, but when the bombs fall and the guns boom they become scared because they just cannot understand it.—*Sunday Pictorial*.

COUNTY SCHOOL.—It was announced at the County School that a former science master, Mr. Douglas Evans, B.Sc., had married a few weeks ago for work of national importance.—*The North Wales Chronicle*.

Wanted (28th May) Young Shepherd for Promised Land.—Advertisement in the *Scottish Farmer*.

For Hitler it is all a race against time. He plans a series of snap decisions, each in its own way intended to divert Britain's attention. I do not think Mr. Churchill is going to be caught by any of them. He probably calculates, what every sound astrologer knows, that the only chance of a German win *must* come this side of November.—Lyndoe in the *People*.

GOBLIN MARKET

THE time is early morning, and the scene is Covent Garden market.

"Got any apples?" asks the greengrocer. The question is unnecessary, he knows that they have some apples.

"What did you say? Apples?" responds the salesman.

"You 'eard," says the greengrocer, laconically.

"Apples! Blimey!" answers the salesman. "'Oo do you think I am?"

"Lord Woolton," answers the greengrocer.

"Guess again."

"Tell you what," offers the salesman, "I got some rhubub."

"Oh, yea," scoffs the greengrocer. "'Oo wants rhubub?"

"Them as wants apples," hints the salesman. "Rhubub and apples goes together lovely."

It is a question of "take it or leave it." He takes sixty bundles of rhubarb and a case of apples.

"Got some lettuces, too," announces the salesman as by an afterthought.

"'Ow many?" asks the greengrocer.

"You can 'ave six crates if you like."

"If I like!" The greengrocer understands that if he likes to buy six crates of lettuces he can have another case of apples. If he doesn't like, well he just doesn't get any more apples. There won't be much profit on the lettuces at ninepence each, and if he "gets stuck" with a crate of them he will stand to lose about ten bob. He decides to take a chance. He buys six crates of lettuces and a case of apples.

"Seen your pal Benny lately?" asks the salesman.

"Benny? 'E ain't no pal of mine. I reckon he's put the shutters up."

"We been looking out for him all this week. I'm saving some apples for 'im."

"Oh, yea? I reckon 'e knows 'e won't get no apples."

Benny is a classic example of a kicker against the pricks, whose fate serves as a warning that "it doesn't do to go shooting off your mouth." For Benny was prosecuted for making conditional sales of onions, and unwisely revealed in court that he had been compelled to buy ten bags of carrots with one bag of onions. He had been fined £20. Six bags of carrots now lay rotting in his closed shop. Some weeks later he was, in some measure, to be revenged, for there were now no onions, and a lot of retailers had conspired to boycott the market salesman in question. The next day we read in the papers that several tons of greens had been sent back to the farms to be dug into the land, but the papers did not say that they were all from one stand in the market.

It is true that that did Benny no good, it did the public no good and it certainly did the farmer no good. It raised the spirits, however, of every retail greengrocer who heard of it, for it made the struggle against racketeering seem a little less hopeless. One or two had plucked up courage and written to the Ministry of Food. They had been informed that, in the absence of detailed evidence, it was impossible for the Ministry to take any action. Detailed evidence was, however, precisely the thing which would cut off their supplies and put them out of business.

The Ministry, they argued, could easily get detailed evidence against the wholesalers, if it wanted it, by the same methods as it gets detailed evidence against the retailer. But if the Ministry started raking around in Covent Garden it would discover a lot of bad smells. The Ministry's job is not to go around like a little Sir Lancelot righting ancient wrongs; it is to show the public that the Government is determined to stop profiteering. This it does by prosecuting people like Benny and securing the infliction of savage fines that demonstrate that the regulations are not to be trifled with. The public does not know and does not care what happens in Covent Garden, it only knows or cares about what happens in the street where it does its shopping. It does not know that the greengrocer has been lying awake half the night, after the All Clear sounded, worrying about his rates, and has had to get up at four o'clock to go to market and grapple with problems the wrong answer to which may mean bankruptcy. It sees a bad-tempered greengrocer who has got to sell his rhubarb and his lettuces, grappling with people who do not want to buy rhubarb and lettuces but who want to buy apples and oranges and onions without having to waste their time standing in queues.

Very few people inside or outside the Ministry of Food know what happens in the early morning in Covent Garden, or trouble to face up to the problems involved in price restriction of perishable goods in short supply. Now that important changes have been made at the Ministry, let us hope that its ignorance of trade conditions will be a little mitigated. While it is the policy of the Government, however—

(1) to keep the cost of living down in the interests of Sound Finance (represented by the Banks);

(2) to pretend that it is lower than it in fact is, in order to avoid wage increases; and

(3) to make a show of stopping "profiteering" by fixing prices without regard to the law of supply and demand:

the present situation is bound to continue. The result of this policy can be observed in relation to the onion position. The controlled price of onions is 4½*d.* per lb., at which price they are absolutely unobtainable. The natural price of onions is about 1*s.* 6*d.* per lb., at which price most people could afford occasionally to buy one or two to flavour a stew. The actual price of onions is now 2*s.* 6*d.* per lb. The extra shilling is the result of price control.

CHARLES ESAM-CARTER

HESS'S CHICKEN

ONE of the most amusing occurrences of recent weeks has been the widespread outburst of indignation over the fact that after Herr Hess had dropped from the skies in Scotland with a broken ankle he was given a portion of chicken to eat. Listening to some of the talk on the subject, a stranger might have concluded that, if Herr Hess had not been given that plateful of chicken, there would have been enough chicken left to go round the entire population of the country, from the richest to the poorest. Never did a few slices of breast of chicken —it may have been only a drumstick—assume such enormous proportions in the popular imagination. Men who had not tasted chicken for a month felt that Herr Hess had robbed them of their rightful share. Women raged as though the chicken had been snatched from their children's lips to feed a scoundrel.

The general theory seemed to be that it is wrong to give a bad man chicken. This theory that there should be moral qualifications for the right to eat chicken seems to me to be an entirely new one. Ever since I was a boy, bad men have been allowed to eat chicken without public protest until their crimes landed them in gaol; and, even after they were sent to gaol, many of them shammed illness and were fed on chicken in the prison hospital. Even to-day, it is said, though chickens are hard to buy, you will occasionally see a profiteer eating chicken in a London restaurant. These are men, for example, who speculate in tinned foods with the result that, in some instances, the price of these is raised by several hundred per cent., and all such people are allowed to eat chicken. If moral tests for chicken-eaters are to be introduced, why not begin with the profiteers?

A countryman asked me the other day what I thought about Hess's chicken. I said: "I think it's a good thing, and I hope the B.B.C. are broadcasting all about it to Germany." "Ah," he said, "if they do, we'll have old Goering over here next. It's a good idea." "It would be better still," I suggested "to give Hess a seven-course dinner and describe it in the German broadcasts to show what England can do in the matter of food even in wartime." "Yes" he agreed, "describe it course by course with a running commentary as Hess is eating it." That notion struck me as being worth considering. Mr. Howard Marshall with that beautiful sense of justice which made him the perfect commentator on Test Match cricket would, if he can speak German, be the ideal man to describe such a meal. He would give full credit to Hess for his good looks as he sat in the sun that shone on the hors-d'oeuvres through the open window. He would keep his listeners apprehensive as to whether Hess would begin with an olive, a sardine or an anchovy. "He's just taken a stab at a sardine." He would note that Hess looked a little nervous as he eyed the Russian salad, like Bradman facing Verity's bowling on a wet wicket. There is no end, indeed, to the nuances of interest and excitement that might enliven a running commentary on Hess enjoying a long dinner right up to the cup of black coffee with two lumps of sugar.

Even apart from its propagandist value, however, I should like to see Herr Hess given plenty to eat. I should be in favour of giving the Devil himself the liver wing of a chicken if he landed in Scotland from a parachute with his cloven hoof damaged. After all, what is there so precious about chicken? If Hess had been given duck or saddle of mutton or even roast beef, I could see some reason why many people should feel angry and jealous. Or salmon, or lamb cutlets, or tripe and onions. But chicken as it is usually served in Great Britain is surely the most over-estimated of birds. After eating the leg of a boiling fowl, I have often been tempted to turn vegetarian. It is said that fried chicken is the American Negro's notion of the food in Heaven; but we do not hear of the Greek gods eating it. I will admit that chicken can be good—very good, indeed—but I can raise no enthusiasm for the generalisation called chicken. It has cost me no pangs in recent weeks to learn that chickens are now almost unobtainable, because chicken-farmers are selling them alive in order to get round the control of prices. I have been relieved rather than otherwise at the disappearance of chicken from the table. That, perhaps, is why I feel no jealousy of Herr Hess on his hospital diet.

Even if chicken were the greatest delicacy procurable, however, I should still be in favour of giving it to Hess or any other Nazi leader who flies for refuge from Germany to England. After all, there is much to be said for the generous treatment of prisoners. There were some people during the last war who raised an outcry at the too generous treatment given to prisoners from German submarines on the ground that they were callous criminals who had flagrantly broken the laws of war; but the clamour died down and the prisoners were given, not the treatment they deserved, but treatment in accordance with the civilisation of their captors. No nation has ever been proud for long of having treated a captured enemy meanly. There are those who maintain that the treatment of Napoleon on St. Helena left a stain on the good name of England. I do not know what truth there is in this; some authorities say that he was treated quite well, others that he was treated shamefully. But no one contends that he *ought* to have been treated shamefully.

Napoleon, no doubt, was on a different level from the Nazis. As Mr. Churchill said recently, he took with him, wherever he went, the equalitarian principles of the French Revolution, however modified, and was to some extent a liberator, so it may be thought he had a better claim on the humanity of his captors than a Nazi leader has to-day. Napoleon's captors, however, would not have admitted his services to civilisation. To them he was the arch-criminal who had carried death and destruction across the continent of Europe, and he was freely denounced as a murderer. Yet, even if he was, who would wish him to have been treated worse than he was in fact treated?

And just as I would allow prisoners good and even, if possible, luxurious food, so I would allow them, however criminal, the right to be described by any epithets they have justly earned. Many people have lately been protesting angrily against Herr Hess's being described as "charming," and say that he is simply one of a band of bloodthirsty gangsters. But surely there is nothing contradictory in saying that a man is charming and, at the same time, that he is a villain. Charm is unfortunately not necessarily a moral quality. Some very bad men have possessed it in superabundance; some very good men have been deficient in it. Charm is often the rogue's advertisement. The financial crook, I have been told, is at the top of his genius a charming fellow. Milton's Satan had a certain sombre charm, or, perhaps, it would be more correct to describe him as a fascinating creature. Benvenuto Cellini had charm. Long John Silver, a cold-blooded murderer, had charm, and so had another of Stevenson's murderers, the Master of Ballantrae. From all I have read of him I should say that Charles Peace had charm. Conrad once protested against a reviewer's describing some of his characters—in *Victory*, I think—as "engaging scoundrels"—and said that in all his life he had never met an engaging scoundrel. He can never have attended a fair and come under the spell of the man who plays the three-card trick or trick-o'-the loop. He can never have been charmed into parting with his money in the lounge of a hotel by a benevolent stranger whose business in life was the performance of the confidence trick. I have a notion that a considerable proportion of the male and female rascals of the world are to be found among the charming people. How charming a man Landru must have been, and the Brides-of-the-Bath murderer, Smith! If only the good were charming, how easy it would be to build up a virtuous commonwealth free from crime and self-seeking! All we should have to do would be to choose the most charming men as our leaders and follow them into the Golden Age. But charm is no more a mark of virtue than being six feet high. Hence, just as I see no harm in describing a malefactor as six feet high, if he happens to be six feet high, I see no harm in describing him as charming if he happens to be charming.

Many people, again, have denounced certain journalists who, after Hess's arrival in Scotland, described him as an idealist. This was a very unreasonable piece of criticism, based on the assumption that all idealists are nice people. I wonder whether the people who object to Hess's being called an idealist have met many idealists. If they had, they would surely have learned that idealists range in quality from saints to murderers. As a correspondent of the *Times* said the other day, ideals may be either true or false. In this respect, ideals are like religion. Dr. Inge once said that most people make the mistake of thinking that religion is necessarily a good thing and fail to realise that many, if not most, religions are thoroughly bad. That is a commonsense observation. After all, a worshipper of Moloch was a religious man, and I suppose the cult of Voodooism is a religion of a sort. Yet, even in modern times, few people would regard the spread of such religions as desirable. False religion has been the curse of religion almost since the beginning of time. It originated long before the worship of the Golden Calf, and it has not come to an end yet.

What is called ideology has taken its place in certain parts of the modern world, and I should say that the sincere victims of ideologies have the right to be described as idealists. If they put their creed into practice, not through love of gain or self-seeking, but through some mystical perversion of faith, they are idealists even though they are thugs or assassins. I once met a little man who believed that the only way to liberate his country was to assassinate as many as possible of the officials of the country that oppressed it. "Every man," he said, "must become a personal avenger, like the Pole who went into the hospital in Warsaw lately and stabbed a Russian who

was lying in one of the beds." I demurred to such a doctrine, but I knew that I was in the presence of one of the terrible tribe of idealists. Burke has something to say of them in *Reflections on the French Revolution* where he calls them doctrinaires. The moral is, never trust a man simply because he is an idealist; he may also be a devil.

A proverb tells us, however, to give the Devil his due, and we may as well admit that on occasion he can be charming and that, far more often than is good for the world, he appears in the guise of an idealist. Frequently he is handsome; frequently, he is fond of music; frequently, also, he has courage. The great thing is, not to deny his good points, but to clip his wings. A devil reduced to harmlessness is no longer a devil that matters and may well be left to the arbitrament of Judgment Day. Meanwhile do not complain if he gets a little chicken. To do so is a waste of that excellent emotion, moral indignation. Y. Y.

COUNTRY NOTES

A Late Spring

It is a usual, indeed an annual, practice to complain that the spring is tardy. English people will never get it into their heads that they must not expect the true spring until the end of April. The first snowdrops and aconites of February make them look for green buds within the next fortnight. They know quite well that they are not founding their optimism on anything reasonable, but the instinct is strong and rather touching. This year, however, it does seem that there is some justification for the grievance: we are well advanced into May, and at the moment of writing the warm days we have enjoyed so far can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The North wind blew for two weeks; the cowls of the oasts remained obstinately turned towards the south; the ice was as thick as a penny on the water-butts and the fields white with frost in the morning of May the seventeenth—a serious matter for the farmers whose apple and cherry blossom have been blasted by this visitation. The grumbling farmer is as old a joke as the exaggerating fisherman, but I wonder how many of the jokers stop to consider the genuine heart-breaking disappointments which bite into the farmer's year? You spend hours of time and pounds of money washing, spraying, greasing your fruit-bearing trees, and then in one night all your work and expense is undone. Through no fault of your own. Just nature at her half-expected tricks. You cannot ward against them, but have to take your chance. You wash and spray and grease-band your trees, and it may all come to nothing for that year. That is luck or bad luck.

It is interesting, however, to observe how differently different men react to these disasters. Some men just slope down and deplore their loss. Others take energetic repairing action. I met one farmer who merely groaned. He had counted on four hundred pounds profit from his apples this year. It was all he had to depend on, he said; and where was it now? Gone down the spout! I met another farmer, who leases nearly two hundred acres of apple-orchard. His orchards happen to lie in the valley where of course the frost hits hardest, low-lying ground always "cops it worst." What was he going to do about it? He had already done something: ploughed between the trees and planted potatoes. All in five days.

I was reminded of the old proverb: *Aide-toi, le ciel t'aidera*. It is indeed necessary to aid oneself out of the troughs of difficulty and discouragement in farming as in everything else; to prise oneself up out of the trough of disappointment on to the crest of a new attempt.

In the Garden

The flowering trees have given a poor display this year in some places; the almond blossom was sparse, and even the reliable prunus and pyrus have not been so lavish as usual. An exception must be made for the very showy Cydonia Knap Hill scarlet: I have seldom seen it finer. I wish this could be planted against every white-washed cottage, for its effectiveness against white makes you blink. Why it should be called scarlet I cannot imagine; if only I could obtain a blood orange and hold the fruit against the flower, I feel pretty sure that the colour would correspond, but it is so long since I have seen a blood-orange or indeed any orange that I cannot be certain. Meantime some coral beads supply a perfect match.

In these days of reduced labour and little spare time, the flowering trees and shrubs are pre-eminently things to plant. They give no trouble, once established, and their reward is an ever-increasing return. Moreover, many nurserymen are selling them off cheaply to make room for other crops. It is too late to take advantage of the offer this spring, but cheap lots should still be obtainable in the autumn. One may tire of the pinks so prevalent in the prunus family, but those who want something different might plant the beautiful cherry known as Ukon (*Prunus serrulata grandiflora*), which has greenish-white flowers, ice-green, with bronze leaves. This variety, however, is unlikely to be offered at a reduced rate.

It is worth noting that some nurserymen now issue plant-tokens, on the same principle as book-tokens, thus solving the problem of what to give one's gardening friends. Some people regard the token as a lazy way out of giving a present, but personally I can imagine nothing more unselfish. It may be less gratifying to the donor to send a slip of paper than an exciting parcel, but the pleasure to the recipient is surely greater in the long run. V. SACKVILLE-WEST

THE EUSTON ROAD GROUP IN OXFORD

Some fifty works by members of the Euston Road Group are showing at the Ashmolean. It goes without saying that this is an exhibition to visit; yet on the day I was there I found it slightly depressing. The pictures were not looking their best. Of this I can be sure, for I have seen most of them elsewhere and know that many are remarkable: here they did not appear so. Partly this was because, on the day of my pilgrimage, the "adorable dreamer" had clothed herself in a raw Scotch mist, so that in the Ashmolean on this May morning the light was pretty much what one expects to find in Bond Street at 4 o'clock of a winter's afternoon; partly it was because the pictures are badly hung. There seems to be plenty of space; and yet there is an appearance of crowding. When I came into the gallery the pictures by Claude Rogers were for the moment seen to advantage. This was because they had elbow-room. Unfortunately, they had elbow-room only because two had been temporarily removed; and as soon as these had been brought back the Rogers wall, like the others, assumed a cramped and sullen countenance.

In such an atmosphere Pasmore is bound to come out best. The gaiety of his colour tells; and his pictures Nos. 29, 31, 32 emerge like Chinese lanterns from a black-out. One glance at Coldstream's study of hands (No. 7) suffices to make anyone feel that he is in the presence of a master. But the big picture of St. Pancras Station, which I have seen and studied elsewhere and know to be a work deeply conceived and in parts finely realised, here, awkwardly placed in a corner, fails to produce the effect it should and could produce. The portraits frankly are disappointing; for I cannot see that the intentional bleakness of the rendering is made up for by added significance either formal or psychological. Art is a delightfully contradictory business: of Graham Bell, Sir Kenneth Clark writes—"(he) is a painter of great simplicity—a sort of Corot, happiest in a mood of quiet contemplation." That, I am willing to believe, is true; and yet I will add that one of our pleasures used to be watching this exceptionally intelligent person setting himself riddles in one exhibition which he would answer in the next. If only he can have space enough and time, here is a painter who may go far; he is that rare thing, an artist who can think, and think clearly, about painters' problems.

Of all these promising artists the most promising, in my opinion, is Lawrence Gowing. *Mare Street, Hackney*, when first it was shown, in 1938, was generally recognised as an extraordinary production for so young a man. *Under the Trees* (1939) and *Alfie Bass* (1940) show that his talent is alive and moving. He is still sufficiently mixed up with his masters to make it difficult, if not impossible, for amateurs and critics to disengage his personality. To watch it emerge and flower will, during the next few years, be their pleasant duty, and doubtless they will be grateful for any pleasures that come their way. And, talking of pleasures, I wish we had been shown more than one picture by Moynihan. He is the most deliberately pleasing of the band. Indeed, beyond talent and genuineness, he has not much in common with the others. His aims are different because, I surmise, his temperament is totally different. He is not above an occasional flick of *bravura;* and is nearer to Manet or, for that matter, Hals, than to Degas. Probably it is an admission of weakness to find his pictures sometimes a relief.

This exhibition should be visited, if only because the young, or youngish, artists represented are our main hope for the future. But whoever makes the journey will find also in the Ashmolean a roomful of eighteenth-century portraits, a nice collection of tapestry and the sculpture much as usual on the ground floor. A further, unbargained for, pleasure awaits him; and an odd one it is. For the shock of finding oneself, after almost two years of exile, inside a museum in being is undeniable and undeniably agreeable. It is ridiculous, no doubt, but it is pathetic too. CLIVE BELL

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, May 31st—
Free German League of Culture Concert, Annemarie Hase: Chansons, 36 Upper Park Road, N.W.3, 7.

MONDAY, June 2nd—
John Pope-Hennessy: "Totalitarian Criticism and Domenico di Bartolo," Courtauld Institute, 5.30.

TUESDAY, June 3rd—
C.I.A. Handel Sonata Concert, St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, 6.30.

WEDNESDAY, June 4th—
Comte Jean Balinski Jundzill: "La Situation actuelle en Pologne," Institut Français, 5.30.

THURSDAY, June 5th—
C. E. M. Joad: "Some Problems of Ethical Philosophy," Birkbeck College, 1.15.
Miss Lesley Lawrence: "London under George III," Courtauld Institute, 1.15.
Pianoforte Recital by Jean Baptiste Toner, St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, 6.30.

FRIDAY, June 6th—
Poetry Society's Reading of *Poetry Review* Poems, 33 Portman Square, 5.30.
Dr. Ruth Schultze-Gaevernitz: "The Balkan Nations—a Growing Community," 28 Woburn Square, W.C.1, 7.30.
Vivian Ogilvie: "The Changing Position of the Intellectual," 36 Upper Park Road, N.W.3, 7.30.

Correspondence

WHAT PRICE STALIN?

SIR,—Stalin is mischievously and dangerously underrated by us. At present we are either reviling him as a bloodstained monster whose sole occupation and delight is the shooting of his political opponents, or assuming that his diplomacy, like that of our own Foreign Office, is concerned solely with the ambitions, rivalries, and cupidities of the seventeenth and eighteenth century dynasties.

Stalin's eminence rests on his solution of two big problems. Confronted with the orthodox theory that Socialism is impossible in a single State surrounded by capitalist States, and that "the revolution" must be international, he decided to try, and established Single State Socialism in the teeth of the Trotsky opposition.

The second was the agricultural problem, which our chosen fainéant Prime Ministers failed so dangerously to solve. Stalin solved it by collective farming. Meanwhile he was nursing industrial Socialism on a scale which was founding new cities and colonies in two continents much faster than we can get a private bill through Parliament for a new tramline. We could not even put a bridge across the Severn whilst he was irrigating deserts and digging two or three Severns. What other statesmen now in power has a hundredth part of his achievement to boast of.

My statement that he was neither Chancellor nor Führer nor Duce nor anything but secretary to the Russian Politbureau or Thinking Cabinet (a very necessary State organ inconceivable in this fatheaded country) was perhaps inexact; for it may be that in Russia as in England a secretary is entitled to a month's notice instead of five minutes; but this does not matter now that Stalin is Prime Minister and can be sacked at a moment's notice as Neville Chamberlain was. He has no hold except that of being the best man for the job.

As to his being afraid of the Führer and the German army, how can that be maintained in the face of the fact that he is the only ruler in the world who has acted in every military crisis as if the German army and its present owner did not exist? What evidence is there that he asked Herr Hitler's leave before he resumed White Russia, changed the Russo-Finnish frontier, and gathered in the Baltic provinces? Is it suggested that these operations were pleasing to the Führer? Or that he would not have prevented them had he dared to tackle the Red army?

Obviously, what Stalin is afraid of is not military defeat but war as such. In a socialised country war is a nuisance and a mischief to everybody. To turn from the marvellous welfare work of building a new civilisation in Asiatic Russia and bringing European Russia up to date to pure destruction, mischief, and devilment, is the worst that Stalin has to fear; and naturally he will go to the utmost limit of prudence to avoid it. But we cannot understand this, because with us war means glory, patriotic heroism, colossal profits, and, at the back of it all, the restoration of the interest on gilt edged to the old five per cent. We throw millions of capital into the fire of war exactly as we throw fishes back into the sea or tons of wheat or coffee into the kiln to keep up the scarcity value of the rest. Under such circumstances we cannot understand a Communist statesman whose object and interest it is to cheapen capital and avoid war as an intolerable plague. Nevertheless, if the U.S.S.R. is forced to fight, I pity its adversaries.

What Stalin has not feared to face is a general election in each of his four new Baltic republics, with adult suffrage and secret ballot. We dare not venture even on a free vote in the House of Commons.

I am acutely aware of the risk of praising a statesman before he is dead; but the extent to which we are duping and doping ourselves by reckless abuse of Stalin just as we used to in the cases of Voltaire and Washington is too dangerous to be let pass.

G. BERNARD SHAW

P.S.—Cannot our caricaturists find something more plausible than the long discarded early uglifications of Ramsay MacDonald to represent Stalin. They were not in the least like MacDonald; and they are wildly unlike Stalin, who is much the handsomest of all the present rulers of Europe. We need the unerring hand of Sir Bernard Partridge, whose pictures of Ramsay were more truthful than any photograph, to set this matter right. If the two cannot meet (five minutes would be enough for Sir Bernard) Stalin should send us a film to dispel our belief that he habitually sports a cardboard nose and false moustache.

[We agree with Mr. Shaw (indeed, "Critic" recently said so) that if Stalin succeeded in keeping the Soviet Union out of war while the rest of the world reduced itself to ruins, he would certainly be acclaimed by history as the first statesman of this age. We should add that in a world reverting to dictatorship, rulers will be judged not by the standards of the nineteenth century, but by those we are accustomed to apply when discussing Charlemagne or perhaps Henry VIII. But to deny that Stalin is a dictator makes nonsense of this realistic defence. If Mr. Shaw is not convinced by the recorded facts that Stalin cannot be sacked by anything short of assassination, then he would not be convinced even though all those who had attempted to challenge his position were to rise from the dead. To say that Stalin behaves as "if the German army and its present owner did not exist" is arrant nonsense; it also greatly under-estimates Stalin's abilities. The whole trend of Stalin's recent policy shows that in spite of the very great military force at his disposal, he has a very lively and intelligent fear of war with Germany. To quote only two recent instances: Stalin has allowed his most energetic and trusting followers in Bulgaria to be passed over to the Nazis, and has preferred to let the Dardanelles and his Turkish alliance go by the board rather than to risk a quarrel with the Führer. This may well be wise policy; it certainly displays a prudent respect for German power.—ED. *N. S. & N.*]

PALESTINE AND EMPIRE

SIR,—"The Mysteries of Arabia" in your issue of May 10th casts a penetrating light on British policy in the Near and Middle East during the last twenty years. It is unfortunate that it is only now, after its bitter consequences in Iraq, that the fallacies and prejudices on which that rickety policy was built, should begin to receive attention.

It is only necessary to add that it was largely the "British-Arab cult" to which your correspondent refers that was responsible for the vicious policy of destroying Britain's undertakings to the Jewish people in regard to Palestine. For the dreamers of this cult the prospect of a Jewish Palestine disturbing the pattern of their Arab dream-world, where the Arabs would eternally follow the "advice" of their British "advisers", was resented and fought by every available means ever since the early days of the military occupation of Palestine.

It was in pursuance of this that the known Axis affiliations of the Mufti and his friends and the widespread and intense activities of the Axis Middle Eastern propaganda and espionage machine in the years preceding the war were winked at; so that at times it seemed almost as if British official policy dovetailed with Axis purposes.

The harm done to Britain by that policy, the weakening of her position in the Middle East should now be plain for all to see. Imagine the strength of Palestine as a British fortress if the pledges to the Jews had not been jettisoned and sabotaged. It has been clear for years that even the Arab opposition would never have been maintained were it not for the tacit encouragement of British officials. The pledges to the Jews could have been fulfilled. And with the passing of the years there could have arisen in Palestine a numerous Jewish population, with a trained army, equipped for modern war and prepared to fight to the death for the defence of their country and consequently for the safeguarding of a key position of British communications. That it would have exercised a stabilising and stiffening influence on the surrounding countries is equally clear. Here was the only policy which could at once have fulfilled Britain's promises and fortified Britain's own strategic interests, without any injustice to the Arabs of Palestine.

But even now it is not too late to remedy the harm. The Jews of the whole world have been clamouring for the creation of a Jewish Army. The New Zionist Organisation and other Jewish bodies have for eighteen months been bombarding the Government with the offer of Jewish man-power, brain-power, resources and other specific services. It is not too late for the Government to take a short cut to remedy the loss they inflicted on Great Britain and the injustice and frustration they have inflicted on the Jewish people. Let the Government give the word for the creation of a Jewish Army: let them encourage and recognise the formation of a Jewish National Committee enabled to call on the whole people wherever they may be, to mobilise all their strength and capacity, to play their part in the struggle for freedom—a freedom which must embrace them no less than the other peoples.

There are unfortunately indications that this has not been realised by those who frame British policy. The appeasement outlook which in Britain's relations with the rest of the world has been finally discredited and discarded has, it seems, been shaken but not discarded in the case of the Arabs. The recurrent references to Raschid Ali as a "rebel," and the almost enthusiastic references to the Regent and his followers (the Government which gave the Nazi agents a free hand) inevitably create the impression that the British Foreign Office is only too content to regard the Raschid Ali Government as an interlude, after which the *status quo* with all its implications for Britain and for the Jews is to be restored.

We Jews shall not rest until this blind and stubborn outlook is cast off. But we have the right to expect that those who have realised its dangers, too, will put forth all their influence to demand an end to this remnant of outworn pre-war policies.

SAMUEL KATZ

Presidency of the New Zionist Organisation,
30 Greencroft Gardens,
London, N.W.6.

REFUGEE ORGANISATIONS

SIR,—Many of your readers of all political shades must feel astonishment at the step recently taken by the T.U.C. in publishing a vague indictment of a number of self-governing refugee organisations. As one of the British supporters of two of the chief of these bodies, I applied to the T.U.C. for further evidence, and have received a reply stating that the General Council do not think it "at all necessary" either to publish it or to discuss it privately with those concerned.

In effect, the organisations in question have been accused by the T.U.C. of carrying on political activities under cover of bogus welfare or educational work. Those who undertook "careful enquiries" for the T.U.C. (although they seek to outbid Scotland Yard) can certainly have very little knowledge of this work, for they have never even taken the trouble to visit the offices or premises of the bodies they condemn unheard, nor to consult the British coadjutors who, at any rate, have first-hand knowledge, and whose honour is also impugned by this attack. The T.U.C. accusation avowedly rests on a claim that the "policy" of these pilloried organisations is controlled by persons who are either Communists or "associate" with such. The only example cited of what that "policy" may be, or how it works, is that the various organisations joined

to form "The Internees Christmas Help Committee" for the sending of Christmas parcels to internees. That this Committee was registered under the War Charities Act, with all the safeguards this implies, is not mentioned. Presumably we are to suppose that the socks, toothpaste and sausages provided carried some nefarious infection.

Those British friends who are really in close touch with the accused organisations know that the work they carry on is of the highest value, and indeed indispensable to the well-being and mental balance of those many refugees (lonely as they are and spiritually starved) who find in them their only remaining opportunity for recreation and normal social life on equal terms. The work in each case represents an effort at self-help which cannot be praised too highly, called forth by urgent needs which British help had failed to meet.

Once upon a time the T.U.C. itself represented a misunderstood, unpopular, poverty-stricken and persecuted minority. By the struggle of generations it has won its way to the security, wealth and respect which it now enjoys. Is it possible that some of its leaders are now also acquiring the mental equipment of their former oppressors? We may hope that in the present instance the policy indicated is controlled or inspired by a very few individuals. Party loyalty may silence the rest.

The refugees have not even the rights of citizenship, nor the funds to carry their case into the courts. They are, in fact, the most defenceless elements in the population, and for this reason have always offered easy prey to scaremongers, foreigner-haters, fascists, and vested interests of many kinds. It would be a terrible blow to British prestige, as well as to the refugees themselves, if the irreplaceable work of their welfare organisations were now to be jeopardised by a new attempt at heresy hunting with all the incitement it breeds to a fresh anti-alien campaign.

DOROTHY F. BUXTON

Whingate,
Peaslake, Surrey.

[We were glad to see a similar protest signed by E. M. Forster, G. P. Gooch, Storm Jameson, Vivian Ogilvie and Vaughan Williams. It is quite true that some of the officials in some of the eight organisations concerned are Communists. But is that a reason for crabbing the admirable cultural and humanitarian work done by them? Their work includes an excellent programme of lectures by very reputable people and of concerts, such as the recent notable Mahler performance. These organisations also help refugees who are sick, bombed out, or without employment. All the eight organisations joined together to bring some sort of Christmas last year even to people who were interned. Their work is badly needed.—ED., *N.S.&N.*]

UNDER WHAT FLAG?

SIR,—Czech soldiers on active service with the Czech forces in this country feel obliged to underline the facts given in the letter of a "Czech Socialist" as well as to share the fears and critics of this correspondent.

We are assuredly apprehensive about being under White leadership which would be only too prepared to lead us into adventures, horrifying the majority of the troops as well as the peoples of Czechoslovakia.

As a result of democratic influence and pressure exercised upon our military authorities by the British public, our condition was improved in comparison with the terroristic rules in our French camps. But we have reason to fear that this progress would disappear from the very moment legal authority is given to those military men. Czech military tribunals are working at high speed—practically in camera—so far only concerned with men on active service. And it is true enough to state that the majority of "criminals" are recruited out of "unreliable elements" such as Jews in special and minorities in general.

We believe it to be essential that British legal institutions should offer some final refuge for Allied nationals in this country.

The British public has to be informed that there is not representation of the Czechoslovak peoples by this army or Government, neither in faith nor in nature. This military and bourgeois clique which is commandeering a handful of conscripted intellectuals, refugees of all kinds and professional soldiers, has always been alien to the true democratic spirit of our people, and this mixed crowd of soldiers is unable in nature and class-composition to reflect a true picture of our population.

The only way to keep decency intact is to exercise public control and to minimise the autocratic powers of our self-elected professionals in military and political matters.

TWO CZECH DEMOCRATS IN KHAKI

THE ISSUE OF INDIA

SIR,—In your columns I drew attention to the inaccuracy of Mr. Edward Thompson's statement that Jawaharlal Nehru in prison "is allowed to write no letters." No quotation from Mr. Thompson's correspondence from unnamed individuals attempting to prove his point and no personal attacks upon myself from Mr. Krishna Menon, who, in spite of anything he may say, is admittedly the "authorised" official propagandist of the Congress Party in this country, can alter the fact that Nehru in prison is allowed to write and receive letters.

In the interests of truth it is worth while recalling what Mr. Amery said about Nehru in the House of Commons on November 20th last:

> Mr. Nehru . . . outstripped Mr. Gandhi both in time, and, I believe, in the character of the speeches he made. These speeches were violent and deliberately provocative, were directly aimed at hampering the war effort, and did so in effect as well as in intention. . . . In any case, Mr. Nehru's sentence was a matter not for the Executive but for the law. If the sentence is judged by him to be excessive he has the right of appeal. In any case, he has been imprisoned under the "A" category under which he is allowed books, his own quarters, the company of others, *frequent letters*, personal interviews and a great many compensations which deprive him of little except the liberty to go about repeating the speeches he has recently made.

If in the meantime there has been any change in the conditions of Nehru's imprisonment, it is due, not, as Mr. Krishna Menon alleges, to harshness on the part of the prison authorities, but to the fact that Nehru, in his passion for martyrdom, has divested himself of the privileges he was accorded.

Mr. Thompson asks whether it is ignorance or misrepresentation on my part that "suppressed" the fact that the Muslim League also demands independence. Nobody knows better than Mr. Thompson that, though the two parties use the same word, they mean by it policies that are diametrically opposed to one another. It is decidedly misrepresentation to suggest that they are thinking of the same thing.

It would be a misfortune if this correspondence degenerated into merely personal points, since I am as anxious as Mr. Thompson himself to see a settlement in India.

ALFRED H. WATSON

29 Malvern Court,
S.W.7.

THE SMALL NATION

SIR,—One of the very few of our war aims which has been allowed to emerge from glamorous obscurity is that we are going to restore the independence of all small nations.

What for? In the four years' war we performed this chivalrous service for half a dozen small nations who promptly entered into enjoyment of all the advantages of sovereignty and ignored all its responsibilities. They behaved as if their new-found territorial integrity was a species of amulet containing magical provisions for its own defence. To themselves, as they strutted through the history of Europe purblind with national pride and drunk with self-sufficiency, they doubtless seemed like lions. To the more discerning eyes of the wild beasts of Germany whom the industrialists of France, Britain and the U.S.A. were thoughtfully refurnishing with teeth, they appeared more realistically as Pekinese. And because they were independent and could not be made to look after themselves they were devoured; and the blood and treasure and substance of the free world is being poured out so that they may be once more disgorged.

But, promises Mr. Churchill, "All, all shall be free." Does he really mean that? Does he seriously contemplate recreating those same conditions which have led to the present disaster? Or is it his view that the British taxpayer will, after victory is won, have to maintain a standing army of occupation in Germany indefinitely to prevent her from once more acquiring the sinews of war? Either alternative is depressing. If on the other hand he hopes to forge an order in Europe in which the small nation is forced to bear an adequate and effective part in insurance against aggression, then he should be more careful about the use of the word "freedom." For the only defensive system worthy of the name in the Netherlands, Central Europe and the Balkans would be one under unified control in each area; and of a quality satisfactory not only to its members, but to the larger powers who might have to supplement it if the test were to come again. And under such a system, whatever other freedom the small nation might have, it would have none in its foreign policy.

If the small nation of the future is to be protected from being a burden to itself and a menace to everybody else, it must be forced to provide the guarantees which this system would require. I am a parent of two children aged ten and six and I feel sure that I speak for millions of other parents when I say that I am certainly not fighting for a "freedom" of the kind which was accorded to the small nations after the last war—a "freedom" bound to confront the next generation with an even more ghastly catastrophe than the present one.

It may be difficult for the Government to be specific about all our war aims at this stage; but that one point should be made clear beyond a peradventure to all those representatives of the invaded countries on these shores. Invasion taught them nothing in the last war. It may have taught them something in this. But we cannot afford to leave that to chance again.

PERCY W. BAX

8 Bustards Gate,
Englishcombe,
Nr. Bath, Som.

DR. WOLF

SIR,—About a year and a half ago you were kind enough to publish a letter drawing attention to the plight of the anti-fascist German writer, Dr. Friedrich Wolf, author among other works of *Professor Mamlock*, and then confined in a French concentration camp.

The French Government, following informal representation by the British Foreign Office at the instance of a Member of Parliament, intimated itself willing to release the prisoner, conditionally on his being able to leave the country. None the less, when the League of American Writers secured for Wolf not only a residence permit for Mexico but permission for the necessary transit through U.S.A., the promised concession failed to materialise. It was refused by three successive French Governments—those of Daladier, Reynaud and Pétain.

Friends of Dr. Wolf will be glad to learn that he is now, however, in Moscow, the Government of the U.S.S.R. having found it possible to bestow Soviet citizenship upon him and thereby to secure his release. This news is conveyed in a letter of thanks from him to the President of the League of American Writers which includes the plea that whatever efforts are possible may be continued on behalf of other anti-fascist writers who remain subject to the Vichy terror.

IVOR MONTAGU

CARLYLE AND THE LONDON LIBRARY

SIR,—In his excellent article upon the Centenary of the London Library last Saturday, that admirable writer, Mr. E. M. Forster, says that at the first meeting to promote the idea of the Library, Carlyle made a fine speech. It is said to be his only speech. If that is said, it is a mistake. We old men who had the good fortune to grow under the influence of that powerful, humane and beneficent personality are not likely to forget the great speech he made in Edinburgh upon his election as Rector in April, 1866, so full of wisdom and benign encouragement to the young. *Punch* at the time published a cartoon of him as the wise man in contrast to some popular orator (I am afraid it may have been John Bright!), and that was one of the best portraits we ever had of that noble figure as we knew him. Though blasted out beyond the reach of libraries, I remember the date fairly well, because it was while he was in Scotland for that address that his humorous and brilliant wife, Jane Welsh Carlyle, best of letter-writers, died suddenly in the Park from the shock of running over a dog, and for the remaining fifteen years of his life Carlyle was deprived of her stimulating but temperate companionship.

HENRY W. NEVINSON

At Campden,
Glos.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

How little a novelist's choice of story and character widens or changes between his first book and his last! In an obvious way there seems to be no kinship between Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree* and *Jude the Obscure*, but reading these books again we see their differences are on the surface. Only age separates the pastoral from the tract. One is the sapling, pretty in its April leafage, the other is the groaning winter oak, stark with argument; but the same bitter sap springs in both their stems. Sue Bridehead is one of the consequences of being Fancy Day, Jude is a Dick Dewy become conscious of his obscurity; the tantalised youth has become the frustrated man and all is a variation on the theme of Hardy's first marriage. What has changed, of course, is the stretch of the scene. After the *Greenwood Tree* we are always struck by the largeness of the panorama and by the narrowness of Hardy's single, crooked, well-trodden path across it. And if the path is narrow; so is the man. He stands like a small, gaitered farmer in his field, dry, set, isolated and phlegmatic, but somehow majestic because he is on the skyline.

There have been dozens of rural novels like *Under the Greenwood Tree*, there have been none at all like the rest of Hardy's work. He is the only English novelist who knows the life and speech of the cottager, the only one to treat the cottager as if he had a serious mind and heart, and lived on wages. (Jude, it is true, speaks like a book or even a pamphlet; but he is a bookish man.) In Hardy the dying peasant of the empty and derelict English countryside is rescued from condescension and towny shepherdess-hunting, and is replaced where Piers Plowman and Burns had found him. And yet Hardy did not achieve this by abandoning all outside standards and attempting to merge spiritually with the peasant in the manner of modern mystical writers like Giono. On the contrary, there is more than a touch of the Victorian antiquarian in Hardy, he smacks of the local museum. What Hardy did was to look at the peasant again from the point of view of the characteristic thought of his day. He is not our first novelist to be influenced by scientific ideas—there was Swift—but he is the only Victorian novelist to have paid any attention to science, to have had his imagination enlarged, as Zola's was also, by the new vistas of time which Darwinism opened. Science became his puritanism. Where his contemporaries neglected the earthly prospects that Darwinism opened and retired to wrestle with their religious beliefs, Hardy grasped this new prospect with the imagination of the artist. Only in *Jude*, at the end of his career, do we see that he, too, may have had this struggle with orthodox faith. Quickly it seems to have been settled. There was a timidity in Hardy's nature, an instinct to go more than half-way to accept the worst, a personal loneliness, which readily made acceptable the great indifferent *It* and the long empty, frightening Eons of *It's* life. In the competitive stampede of Victorian liberty the peasant was left behind, he was not the fittest to survive; under the iron stamp of Hardy's Victorian determinism, he was fixed lonely and great.

This is said to be the weakness and not the strength of Hardy. And it is true that a novelist is usually ruined by his philosophy of life. Easily shown to be untenable, a philosophy—once the glamour has worn off—is also easily shown to be the element by which an art and human nature are falsified. The world is not a machine. Knowing this and, under the influence of French and Russian novelists, and with the decline, too, of self-confidence in middle-class culture, the English novelist has tried letting life tell its own story, or as in the case of D. H. Lawrence has made heavy borrowings from abroad. When we compare the result of this with Hardy's achievement, our position is humiliating. Whatever else the English novel may have achieved during the last 30 years, it has not described English life. It has described the sensibility of Western cosmopolitana and has been essentially the work of people who have been expatriates in their own country. There is, of course, a curious passage in *Jude*, after the murder of the children, when the doctor wonders whether the unrest growing in society has not awakened a universal wish for death, a passage which shows that the disintegrating ferment was working in Hardy himself. But his beliefs were cast in the sober, native moralistic mould. Since puritanism we have always had this moral gravity and our moral instinct has been social and practical, not intellectual. When we open Hardy again we are back to worry and moral conflict, the normal condition of the English nature. The nerves relax as we prepare for what, in our bones, we understand: the love of liberty oddly manacled to respect for circumstances, the cry of passion half extinguished by ruminations over right and wrong.

The very prose of Hardy, heavy with a latinity which always suggests to me that Milton has been reborn to drive a steam roller along the Wessex roads, has the effect of pressing men down among their neighbours and into the hills and towns where they live. Around the "rages of the ages" assembles the rural district council, and beyond that a moral hierarchy of which the council is the awkward shadow. As in Ibsen, Fate works among the sanitary engineers.

In the pastoral realism of *Under the Greenwood Tree* there is a visual vividness, despite some old-fashioned phrasing, which is like our own to-day and the talk of the cottagers is taken, rich and crooked, as it came from their mouths. If one discards the quaint scenes when the Mellstock worthies are together, in the plain comedy of Fancy's wedding at the end, there are passages which have the true, unpolished country look. The tranter is speaking of his marriage:

> "Ay, 'twas a White Tuesday when I committed it. Mellstock Club walked the same day and we new-married folk went a-gaying round the parish behind 'em. Everybody used to wear something white at Whitsuntide in them days. My sonnies, I've got the very white trousers that I wore at home in a box now. Ha'n't I Ann?"
>
> "You had till I cut 'em up for Jimmy," said Mrs. Dewy.

But long before *Jude*, the visual vividness had gone. There appeared instead that faculty of instant abstraction in Hardy's eye, whereby the people, the towns, the country, became something generalised in the mind, as if time had seized them. The light catches the vanes of Christminster and they glint the more brightly because they are seen against a foreground "of secondary and tertiary hues." One is looking at things not seen by an eye but known by a mind, by tens of thousands of minds. If society in the mass could see, if a town or village could look, this is what they would see. Masses themselves, they would see beyond the surface to the mass beneath. The realism of Hardy is a realism of place, you are aware all the time that hundreds of other people are passing and bumping into Jude and Sue Bridehead when they stand in the street or go to the train, carrying their passion with them. Jude confesses to his first marriage in a vegetable market; he is seen by his first wife in the crowd at an agricultural show. In streets, on railway platforms, lodging houses, inns and in empty churches, his tragedy is enacted. The fidelity of Hardy's descriptions of love affairs lies in his drawing not only of love itself, but of its conditions. The characters of Hardy, being rural people, are always on the move, trailing their lives about with them, printing their history fragmentarily as they go upon vehicles and roads. This is humdrum. The modern novelist uses journeys as a device in which, perhaps, to go into his characters' thoughts or to pick up scenes from the past; in Hardy the journey is part of the story, because it is the business of his characters, and fired as it is by the passions of his characters, the humdrum becomes a kind of social poetry. Hardy himself called it "the low, sad music of humanity." The coincidences, the fateful and accidental meetings in Hardy are often criticised, but how many of them are the natural irony of life without anything forced about them. Hardy is indeed the master of coincidence because he is the master of the movement of people and overwhelmingly the scenes one remembers in his books are the journeys. Widely his characters circle from the central point of their tragedy, yet mile by mile they come nearer to it. Though the murder of the children in *Jude* is too incredible to horrify, the changes of lodging which Jude and Sue have to make just before the murder, when they are turned out either because they are not married or because the lodging-house keepers won't take in children, have a dramatic awakening for the reader. One of the most plaguing problems of the novelist is that of how to get his characters about from place to place. Hardy turned the problem into the drama itself.

As so many Victorian novels do, *Jude* suffers at crucial moments from the intervention of the author. "The poor fellow," we are told, "poor Jude," "honest Jude," and so on. When a novelist draws a prig he is usually doing a kind of self-portrait and Jude walks stiffly to his doom. Socially minded critics have pointed out that if Jude had been born a little later he would have gone to Ruskin College and the whole tragedy would not have happened. This is nonsensical criticism. There is a tragedy of the desire for knowledge. Hardy's analysis of the phases of Jude's intellectual development and disillusion is masterly, and only fails when he makes Jude die with the bells of Remembrance Day at Christminster in his ears. That is as bad as the lovers kissing under the gibbet where ten years later one of them will be hanged. The reason, to my mind, why the book fails, is that part of it is a tract on the marriage laws. It would have been perfectly fitting for Jude to be ruined by two women (one a sensual slut and the other a fey, half-sexed coquette posing as an ethereal creature of fastidious higher nature) without dragging the marriage laws in. Hardy was at his worst in attacking convention, because his interests were so narrow. What are his tragedies? Love stories only, the enormous Victorian preoccupation with sex. He seems never to have outgrown the tantalisation, the frustration, which the Sue Brideheads brought down upon their husbands, making them such experts on female vanity that they could never turn from the subject to other dramas around them—as Zola could turn to the mines and the soil, Balzac to money, Dickens to the farces and tragedies of the law. The attack upon convention is one of the great bores of the late-Victorian period, for all the attackers except Shaw thought they could get rid of conventions without damaging the basis of the kind of Society which produced the conventions.

V. S. PRITCHETT

THE OBSCURE IMAGE

The Father Found. By CHARLES MADGE. *Faber.* 6s.

Apollyon and Other Poems of 1940. By G. ROSTREVOR HAMILTON. *Heinemann.* 3s. 6d.

The White Cliffs. By ALICE DUER MILLER. With a Preface by SIR WALTER LAYTON. *Methuen.* 2s. 6d.

The convention of obscurity in poetry has lasted ever since the beginning of the last great war; it covers a quarter of a century and illustrates one of the most curious periods in literary history. Conventions do not start as conventions; they seem to be produced by absolute necessity; not till their later stages, when the historical sense begins to work on them, are they seen as relative. This stage seems to have been reached in the history of modern poetic obscurity; the unequivocal compulsion to be obscure has given way to speculation on the need for obscurity. That is to say, the need is no longer imperious, and the desire to explain it, and by that means get rid of it, is left. The need as it was felt was a need to say something more intimate and essential about experience than could be said in the rational, comprehensible verse of the time. This could be done only by a more daring and elliptical use of imagery; what really distinguishes the poetry of the last 25 years is not obscure thought or obscure syntax, but the obscure image. An image is effective if it evokes an object for which it clearly stands, or, more rarely, if it suggests a shadowy something in our minds, a possible object, not completely apprehended, and perhaps never to be completely apprehended. Donne's famous line,

> Else a great Prince in prison lies,

is the pattern of this sort of image. It corresponds to an object, but we cannot define what the object is. The poetry of the last two decades, in its search for a more intimate expression of experience, turned to this kind of imagery more exclusively than any other period of poetry has done. To use such imagery largely has obvious dangers; the possible object corresponding to the image may exist in some readers' minds and not in others'; or, to take an extreme instance, it may exist only in the mind of the poet himself. When the miracle comes off, the effect on the reader is far deeper than that of more straightforward poetic communication; on the other hand, the attempt to achieve complete intimacy of communication, pushed to its extreme limit, may cut off the poet from everyone but himself, his first communicant. The obscure image then degenerates into the isolated image, the image for which there is no object in the reader's mind, which has no magical property, therefore, since it changes nothing (the magic which we attribute to poetry comes from the transforming operation of the image on the object to which it corresponds). Reading the poetry of the last quarter of a century with an eye on the imagery alone, one cannot help being struck by the frequency with which communication seems to have failed. It is probably a realisation of this that has led to the reaction against obscurity. Yet the obscure poets certainly deepened imagery. The crime of the younger political poets is that they have rationalised it.

In his latest volume of poems Mr. Madge displays a variety of styles. He is obscure, sometimes in the good and sometimes in the bad sense; he shows the influence of Mr. Eliot in one poem, and of Mr. Auden in another; yet he works, nevertheless, in an imaginative world of his own. His longest poem, *The Father Found*, is a work of intellectual fantasy vivified by occasional strokes of dramatic imagination. These strokes lose their force in the framework where he has set them. One can imagine the following lines coming in with intense power in a dramatic poem:

> I have been, sir, in a railway waiting room,
> And of a table-cloth have made my desert
> Where infinite death was laid with knife and fork.

But the point at which they come does nothing to support them; they are left suspended in a pale fantasy. Later in the same poem there is an example of the isolated image:

> The Divine Mistress is like cloves,
> Up and down her fore-arm dozens of motor-cars are racing.

It is difficult to tell whether this is an unattached fancy or an intellectual exercise. Mr. Madge's imagination has a peculiar algebraical quality, shown very finely in "The Black Beam" and "Who Lives in a Castle," a lovely and distant poem, in which romantic properties are employed to construct a geometrical image of life. Mr. Madge's use of conventional measures is surprisingly felicitous. The feeling of mystery which his poetry gives seems to be associated with his love of geometrical shapes in a clear, shadowless light; all objects tend to acquire a resemblance to the circles and triangles and pentacles employed by the necromancers. Everything has been intellectualised and yet retained in the world of imagery. The book is very uneven; some of the poems, in spite of a general feeling of clarity due to the admirable diction, give a muddled impression; but the best of them have a fine depth and clarity.

Most of Mr. Hamilton's poems deal with the war. The shorter ones display the author's admirable epigrammatic gift; the longer are somewhat disappointing. To call the Germans

> Deliberate murderers, furious liars

is not impressive. Abuse of evil always makes it look smaller, not greater. Mr. Hamilton's address to "Boys, Yet at School," being unforced, is much better, though it ends rhetorically. The thought of Mussolini as a contemporary Nero playing

> second fiddle while his country burns

is a pleasant conceit. The imagery is sometimes witty, but has no depth. Unlike Mr. Madge, Mr. Hamilton never seems to have passed through the obscure stage, and his poetry loses by it.

The White Cliffs is a long poetic tribute to England by an American lady. Lynn Fontanne has twice read it through on the American radio. It is full of spontaneous feeling and has enormous fluency. It should be read by the page, not by the line:

> The English love their country with a love
> Steady, and simple, wordless, dignified;
> I think it sets their patriotism above
> All others.

Nevertheless, this poem shows a capacity for expressing—however roughly—all sorts of thoughts and feelings and situations which serious poetry now generally ignores; and it never flags.

EDWIN MUIR

ANYBODY'S WAR

Outside Information. By NAOMI ROYDE-SMITH. *Macmillan.* 5s.

Front to Back. By HECTOR MACQUARRIE. *Cape.* 8s. 6d.

Back to England. By MAIRIN MITCHELL. *Muller.* 7s. 6d.

No one, so far as I am aware, has written a History of Rumour, though much historical writing would, unfortunately, deserve quotation in such a work. Yet rumour, from the popular mass hysterias that continually set the bells ringing and the citizens arming in Elizabethan London, to such circumstantial fancies as those which lost von Kluck the Marne and Germany the first Great War, has played a very large part in history and has often done more than fact to shape the course of events. One could make a fascinating study of the different genera of rumour—the evergreens, such as resurrected princes and the miraculous interventions of Castor and Pollux or the angels of Mons and Dunkirk; the perennials, the upas tree, the sea-serpent and the man-eating orchid; and the giant marrows, such as the Russians with snow on their boots and Orson Welles' men from Mars. But perhaps rumour really belongs in a minor appendix to the history of human folly, a subject much too vast ever profitably to be attempted.

Miss Royde-Smith began, as she says, with the purely frivolous intention of keeping a diary of rumours about the present war, and records a number of those stories that, in the early days of the raids on London, repeatedly demolished important public buildings and wrought more and greater devastation than an enemy communiqué. But, with the notable exceptions of the attempted invasion that strewed half the coasts of Europe with a litter of Nazi corpses, and of the hairy-wristed parachuting nun with her armoured bicycle and packets of poisoned toffee, the war has not until now been very productive of good circumstantial fantasies; and Miss Royde-Smith soon exchanges her original intention for a series of haphazard but vivid observations of how she and her friends reacted to autumn, 1940—for many of them the beginning of the war. For her, as for most of us, the chief impression was confusion, discomfort and talk. The inconvenience of getting to, from and about London, the formidable difficulties of finding people, the slowing of tempo in the minor activities of life, all the muddled and maddening frustrations of a new-comer in a film studio. And, above all, the talk. Rumours about bombing, about Gaulle, about evacuees; gossip of what had happened, would happen, and was happening; endless uninformed military and political discussion. Occasionally violence would break through in the blast of a bomb or the lurid spectacle of St. James, Piccadilly, blazing, but for most of the time the war was merely a noise off. Probably, to the participants, all battles seem something like that. *Outside Information* consists mainly of letters from quite ordinary people giving their war impressions, and is neither more nor less than the reader has a right to expect. It is in no way a remarkable book, but will be, for most of its readers, a good photograph of their own experience, and for the foreigner an intriguing glimpse of English stoicism in action.

The social and "human" side of the present war is likely to be exceedingly well documented, probably because, although it is still far less squalid and bloody than its predecessor, the conflict has had a greater effect on more individuals, and has, through the bomber and the threat of invasion, reached out to stir the lives of classes very little affected by the war of 1914–1918. *Front to Back* is a diary of the first year of the war, from the viewpoint of a comfortable, literary, middle-aged bachelor; and although it has little fresh to say, presents warmly and amusingly the typical reactions of the non-combatant bourgeois, and obviates in one book the need for a whole sector of mass-observation. Everything is there. Chamberlain-worship ("Hitler [at Munich] must have been unaware that Mr. Chamberlain was acting much less as a Prime Minister of Great Britain than as a simple Christian in supreme authority with no choice but to follow the dictates of his Master"); hysterical hang-Hitlerism ("If Hitler comes to London he will pass through a well-ordered city to his destination—Pentonville, where common murderers are hanged. Anyone in authority who suggests the Tower of London as a prison for Schicklegruber's son will be asked by the British people to join the less worthy shades which haunt that fortress"); and equally enthusiastic anti-Bolshevism ("What

possible good could Stalin's Russia be to the country which has bred the men of the R.A.F.? We cannot have God and Stalin.") But if Mr. MacQuarrie is sometimes a little too excited, he also tells some excellent stories, and records one delightful and revealing sidelight on the manners of the English press. After the evacuation of Dunkirk, an Agency released a photograph of a transport crowded with rescued soldiers, one of whom was climbing naked up the side of the ship. A very popular illustrated morning paper printed the picture as it stood; an enlightened penny daily gave the soldier a towel to hold modestly before him; and the *Times* clothed him in a well-tailored pair of shorts. I am not quite certain what the moral is.

Back to England is a farewell to Continental holidays. Miss Mitchell, already known as a travel-writer, describes her last ramble round the stamping-grounds of the Grand Tourists before the outbreak of war barred the roads and slammed the ticket-windows indefinitely shut. The Hanse coast, the Carmargue, high Switzerland, the plain of Lombardy—Miss Mitchell visits them all; and if her periods are a little like those of a guide-book, that serves only to heighten the nostalgia. All travel-books are good reading to-day, when even the familiar names of Paris and Milan are touched with the unattainable felicities of Sirmio or the Isle of St. Brendan.

JOHN MAIR

A DEMOCRATIC NATION

Estonia. By J. HAMPDEN JACKSON. *Allen and Unwin.* 8s. 6d.

I should have preferred a different book on Estonia, although the author has achieved, owing to his straightforward enthusiasm, to convince the reader that "by common consent Estonia has given the most admirable result in practice" of what a small nation can do with self-government in twenty years. I should have liked another kind of book because I believe Estonia showed more than that. The author is very emphatic in his desire to demonstrate that, for a thousand years, the life of Estonians under Vikings, monks, Teutons, Swedes and Russians was one long martyrdom. It has not been quite that. One might in the same way speak with unmitigated hatred of Spanish, Danish and other influences in the whole of our hemisphere at one or another period.

The rulers of Estonia doubtlessly left good as well as bad traces behind them: the Vikings taught them to develop their home industry, the monks brought Christianity, the knights showed the dangers of excessive individualism. The mistakes of the Swedes were mistakes unavoidable in the middle of the sixteenth century. Had Peter and Charles not had a quarrel over the Baltic states, Estonia might have still been under Swedish rule, and perhaps the Finns would be able to tell us how much they would have liked that. Then came the intricate period of the Balto-Russian rule and on the whole I believe Estonians will agree that it is probably owing to the essential characteristics of the population that that period showed up less of the bad qualities of both nations. This might have been the case with a feebler people. In fact, these past influences take up too much of the book, their "wickedness" is exposed too passionately and vehemently, for there is no doubt that they have all played some part in the building up of the extreme adaptability and capacity to absorb, which has been one of Estonia's outstanding characteristics as well as its capacity to "keep together." This should have been told to us at greater length: not how Estonians revolted against the invader—that is always laudable—but how they developed under him and what they acquired from him. We should like to know how it was they achieved so great a success in one essential of democracy, as compared with various other little god-children of Versailles—their attitude towards minorities. The minorities had a better life within the Estonian frontiers than anywhere else. The Estonians recognised some of their superiorities, dealt patiently with certain resentments, were consistent in the carrying out of their methods.

I do think that in a book which will have the importance of this one, as a textbook on Estonia and as a tribute of what it has achieved in the past and what it may still, I fervently hope, achieve in the future, it is unnecessary to have so minute a survey of the doings of the Russian government within its own frontiers up to 1914—for that after all is Russian rather than Estonian history. The influence of the German *Kulturträgers*, the Balts, had its ugly points, but some of it the Estonians themselves would recognise as beneficent. Provincial, yes, but then why should they be different when they represented no more than the population of a county? The "belonging to the soil" was felt by Balts as well as the Estonians—or isn't 700 years long enough to acquire that sense of belonging? And it was that sense of belonging which made the Balts Estonian citizens before making them pro- or anti-German, pro- or anti-Russian. The Estonian press which I have seen since the emigration of the Balts showed a great understanding of this and very few signs of vengeance.

No, I repeat, this book does not do half enough justice to what is an Estonian virtue, a true democratic and receptive conception of life. Had they been so busy hating and nourishing grouses, as Mr. Jackson makes them out to have done, they would not have had the energy to make the supreme effort they did from 1918 onwards of modelling their little country to the best of their ability, making mistakes and correcting them, content, modest and unassuming. That is a prodigious feat of toleration and adaptation for an oppressed people, a people representing the majority of the population but ruled by a class of higher educational standard. We ought to know more about it. Liberty, freedom (for they are not synonyms) and equality were Mr. Päts' slogans and he struggled splendidly to uphold them. Let us hope he has not entirely failed, that his spirit still lives.

What I have said should not deter people from reading Mr. Jackson's book. His enthusiasm is unquestionable. His heart is in the right place, and there is no other book of the sort available.

M. Z.

AESCHYLUS AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION

Aeschylus and Athens. By GEORGE THOMSON. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 21s.

It is fitting, though with melancholy fitness, that this book should have appeared so nearly simultaneously with the death of Sir James Frazer, for it breaks new ground in the application of those studies of which *The Golden Bough* is the most symbolic monument. Others have applied anthropological data to the development of Greek religion and the Greek drama; Professor Thomson is, so far as I know, the first to apply them to the elucidation of a single poet.

He should be as well equipped as any man living to elucidate Aeschylus. He has produced admirable editions of Aeschylus's greatest works, the *Prometheus* and the *Oresteia*. He has handled worthily, and enriched, the store of material Headlam left unpublished, along Headlam's own lines. In this book he has turned away from these to new lines of approach, and made it his aim to set Aeschylus against

'You are old, Father William,'

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"Yet your eyesight all others surpasses;
You pick out a Messerschmitt hundred-and-ten
At seven miles high without glasses!"
"It's a fact," said the sage, "that my brainpower's great,
And my intellect towers o'er the crowds,
I'll tell you my secret of picking out 'planes—
My head's always been in the clouds!"

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And yet you have caused great surprise
By spurning the ear-plugs the warden brought round;
I ask you, dear sir, is that wise?"
"In my youth," said his father, "my parents had hoped
I'd embark on a music career,
But the first report issued on my aural aims
Stated briefly 'This child has no ear'."

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And yet you go out in the night
And walk about normally, just like a cat,
You have quite an abnormal sight."
"I admit," said his pa, "that at logic I'm bad,
Deep argument all past me flows,
So the lack of street lights doesn't matter at all—
I never could see past my nose!"

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"Yet you set an example to many
By sitting in dug-out in air raid alarms
Without chatt'ring your teeth. Have you any?"
"I've them all!" snapped the sage as he cuffed his son's ear,
"Without charge I'll reveal this great truth
By twice daily using Euthymol Tooth Paste
I'll never be old in the tooth!"

Dentists have recommended Euthymol—the antiseptic tooth paste—for over 40 years. Large tubes cost 1/6 (including Purchase Tax) from all chemists.

(With apologies to Lewis Carroll)

his true background, the beliefs and customs, religious, tribal and political, which lay behind the Athens of Marathon and Salamis.

This is a valuable enterprise, because, though we are accustomed to think of Sophocles as a type of the fifth century Athenian and Euripides as a forerunner of the uneasy individualism of the fourth century, we do not so often remember that Aeschylus, born in 525 B.C., is, educationally, the product of the sixth century. His grandfather lived in an age before Cleisthenes, in an Attica no more like the Athens of Pericles than the England of the Wars of the Roses was like Shakespeare's England. Less like, indeed: for progress was faster in those days. Aeschylus is the only strong link remaining between the City State in tribal embryo and the City State in its perfection.

Into the study of this background Professor Thomson has thrown himself with enthusiasm, unflagging energy and an ingenuity that is in the main well controlled. There are times when his interest runs away with him, but he has then the judgment to guide the careering steed off the course into the scholarly obscurity of an appendix and let it curvet there—*cf.* pages 406, 407, where a table illustrating the Indo-European Terms of Relationship makes the Table of Kindred and Affinity look like a three-legged stool. In his anthropological chapters he handles a mass of material, half scientific, half conjectural, with clearness and sanity. He brings together heterogeneous data into an orderly and coherent whole. It is soon apparent that he is no less well equipped culturally than linguistically.

But to at any rate one lover of Aeschylus and admirer of Professor Thomson this book is, though always interesting, disappointing. And probably more than one reader will be repelled, as I am, by its bias. There is a sentence in the Introduction which sounds a note of warning: "The art of Aeschylus, *like all art*, must be studied as a product of social evolution" (page 5; the italics are mine). Very soon we can perceive whither the process of social evolution is bound to lead us. In the upshot it is clear that the study can be wholeheartedly approved only by a good Communist.

This bias, while it widens the scope of previous work on Aeschylus, narrows regrettably the beam of illumination now cast on the poet, or even on his city. "From the outset of his career Aeschylus was concerned with the evolutionary process which had transformed the primitive Attica of tradition into contemporary Athens." True enough; but not the whole truth; and not the truth about Aeschylus which matters most to the reader of his poetry. And it seems to me doubtful whether he was so consciously concerned with it as this book would have us believe. Professor Thomson does, indeed, admit that "It is, of course, obvious that Aeschylus did not think in terms of social anthropology." But he still seems to insist overmuch on a kind of conscious spiritual progress, if not exactly "from Log Cabin to White House," at least from the primitive wilds to the "tremendous stimulus" of the democratic revolution. True, he has Aeschylus's own words to back him; but when Aeschylus in the *Agamemnon* declared that the doctrine that wealth breeds pride and brings punishment was to him an outworn creed, it is doubtful whether he would have thought it just to call the *Persae* "an eloquent homily on a rather tedious text."

Affronted Conservatism is as much open to the charge of bias as any other bigotry. And it may seem captious to complain of features of book production which are probably due to war conditions. But the binding is unnecessarily repellent: and it almost passes belief that an editor responsible for the beautiful Greek text of Professor Thomson's *Prometheus* and *Oresteia* could endure the enormity of "xyneka" and other barbarous transliterations.

Apart from its general bias and these minor flaws, the book contains much that is valuable. It breaks new ground; or, rather, it shows that fields already much tilled can bear a new crop. Its earlier chapters display an admirable mastery over multifarious and confusing material. Professor Thomson can keep his head and see clearly through the mists of distance in time and space; he understands how far the practices of Australian Bushmen are a valid and trustworthy clue to those of primitive Greece. His exposition of them is all the more stimulating because it is provocative. Many of the ideas which seem to me new seem also very good: e.g., in the interesting chapter on Orphism the suggestion that its widespread and rapid diffusion was due to a connection with industry and trade, leading to the further attractive hint of a link between the mines of Laurium and the Cave of Plato. In the chapter called "After Aeschylus," a just and memorable epitome, the politico-social standpoint opens unfamiliar views which it is worth while to have defined, e.g., on Euripides, "like other rationalists, he failed to see that the evils of society could never be cured by an appeal to reason, because their origin lay, not in ignorance or unenlightenment, but in a conflict of interests."

But with all due acknowledgment of the book's merits the disappointment remains, and the sense that the proper balance of appreciation is upset. It is a tribute to Professor Thomson's persuasiveness that one should feel a little thankful that one had read Aeschylus before *Aeschylus and Athens*. The sense that the book is not a wholly trustworthy guide springs from the conviction that concern with social evolution is not an adequate measure by which to assess great poetry, and that it ought to be more explicitly recognised that it is not merely his relative proximity to the medicine-man's hysteric inspiration that makes Aeschylus a better poet than Karl Marx.

J. R. BACON

NEW NOVELS

The Fields of Paradise. RALPH BATES. *Cape.* 8s. 6d.

The Silver Darlings. NEIL M. GUNN. *Faber.* 10s. 6d.

Fingal's Box. HARLEY WILLIAMS. *Cape.* 8s. 6d.

Light in Italy. JACK LINDSAY. *Gollancz.* 8s. 6d.

Up at the Villa. W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM. *Heinemann.* 6s.

There is a gap in literary-criticism filled in biology by ecology: some German student or member of the John Dewey school will ultimately bring the science to birth no doubt, but for the present the environmental factors producing good and bad literature, and various forms of literature remain obscure. It would be interesting to know why the English novelist transplanted to Mexico behaves so like the European fruit tree when planted in California and produces a travesty of his normal product, bright coloured, juicy, but without flavour and of repellent texture. One recalls the grotesqueries of *The Plumed Serpent*—the Sexton Blake secret society, the climacteric love making, the mystic callisthenics, and such passages as:

> Ramon sat forward in his rocking chair, holding his cup in his hand, his breasts rising in relief. And on his thighs the thin linen seemed to reveal him almost more than his own dark nakedness revealed him. She understood why the cotton pantaloons were forbidden on the plaza. The living flesh seemed to emanate through them.

—through the book Lawrence is writing comically on the verge of self-parody, an awful warning. It is as if the style was made meaningless by being enlarged from inside, like a picture painted on a balloon that is then blown up a good deal more. The same fate has befallen Mr. Ralph Bates whose *The Fields of Paradise*, while undoubtedly his work, is in some way a caricature of all the work he has done: the tensity and validity of his writing about Spain has gone, the style has opened up at the seams and the daylight comes in. It is as if the collapsed Indian cultures and the colossal failure of western culture to take their place threw English writers into a state of depression, as if the social *débâcle* and the excessive brilliance of the sunlight combined to form something too indigestible to make good literary material. Mr. Bates' simple story of a young man and a young woman falling in love and finally marrying is placed in a setting which has the peculiar excess of brightness that belongs to a kind of pre-

Change the Name

a novel by

ANNA KAVAN

'A brilliant study of abnormality' JOHN O'LONDON

'A novel to admire for a skill that holds one's interest to the end' BIRMINGHAM POST

'Fine-spun sensibility is evident in this novel about a woman with a strain of aloof and day-dreaming egotism' TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

'A good study of the completely selfish woman who knows what she wants and loses no time in getting it, whatever the expense to others. Her story is well told and the characterisation is acute' MANCHESTER GUARDIAN

7s 6d net

by the author of ASYLUM PIECE

JONATHAN CAPE · 30 BEDFORD SQUARE · LONDON

There is now a full supply of the 3rd edition; if you have failed to get a copy, ask again now (12/6)

DODD'S DIARY

Dodd was U.S. Ambassador to Germany, 1933-1938: this is the private diary he kept during his mission

"A whispering campaign against its accuracy was attempted in London, and I have been at some pains to hunt down and dispose of these detractions whenever they took a definite form. It is one of the frankest and most clear-headed accounts we are ever likely to have of the European drama during the past seven years. His outspoken comments on the Fascist sympathies of many upper-class British people are extremely illuminating"—*H. G. Wells*

"There can be no sort of doubt that it is certain to be one of the indispensable documents for the future historian of our time. . . . A lifting of the veil by one whose training and insight fitted him to understand the forces in play.... There is not a redeeming feature in these pages about the Nazi rulers. It is clear that they planned for war; it is clear that they wanted war. . . . No Englishman emerges with credit from these pages. Our first Ambassador, Sir Eric Phipps, is aloof; the attitude of Sir Nevile Henderson has been defined in his own book. Lord Lothian, whatever he may have done later to retrieve his reputation, is, in these entries, the ardent friend of the Hitler system.... It is the story of a fantastic nightmare. My own inference from it is the simple one that it will always recur until the people charge themselves with their own destiny.... Ought to be read by every Socialist as an indispensable guide to the peace"—*Harold Laski* (*Tribune*)

"In entry after entry of this amazing diary he piled up evidence on the essentially warlike character of the Nazi regime. . . . During his time in Berlin he witnessed the evil flowering of Nazi barbarism—the murder and torture of political opponents and even innocent and politically non-interested workers, the excesses of anti-Semitism, and the purge of Roehm. Because Dodd was intensely human there is something of Pepys in this diary; because he had a passion for justice, and a sardonic eye, something of Voltaire; because he was a trained historian who saw with a maximum of objectivity, a touch of Gibbon of the 'Autobiography'"—*Cavalcade*

"An unembellished record of diplomatic Germany from June 1933 to December 1937. We learn the atmosphere of high diplomacy in Nazi Germany . . . we read his conversations with the Nazi leaders, with fellow ambassadors in Berlin, with international journalists, visiting diplomats, American business men who sometimes advocate Fascism for the United States, with persecuted Jews, with official and unofficial ambassadors from Britain, with those who hoped to appease Germany, those who saw only disaster ahead, those who admired the Nazi regime and those who came to feel that the only hope lay in a combination of democratic powers with the U.S.S.R. to stop Hitler's expansionist aims"—*Kingsley Martin* (*New Statesman*)

"The tale he has to tell explains a lot and (as Dodd might say) *then some*. Do you remember Baldwin denying, again and again, Churchill's revelations about German re-armament? Dodd gives the explanation . . . In September 1934 Dodd informed the British Ambassador of the German purchase of a million dollars' worth of aircraft from the United States, for which the Nazis had paid in gold. He was astonished to find that . . . At a time when Germany was refusing to pay its debts to the Lancashire cotton trade, he says that . . . a mysterious 'British woman, connected with Hitler's inner group', had been in Berlin to sell war equipment for the British firm of Vickers-Armstrong. One day Schacht . . . 'acknowledged that the Hitler Party is absolutely committed to war'. . . . William Bullitt, while still U.S. Ambassador to Moscow, thought that Russia.... Of Goering, Dodd paints some pretty pictures.... Himmler's favourite sadistic trick.... Laval was intriguing with Nazi secret agents as far back as 1935.... Lord Londonderry once sat in silence at a Nazi show while Goering. . . . Sir Nevile Henderson was reported.... Sir John Simon was regarded by everybody. . . . Polish Ambassador Lipski was convinced.... And so"—*Reynolds*

WELLS

his "GUIDE TO THE NEW WORLD: A HANDBOOK OF CONSTRUCTIVE WORLD REVOLUTION." Just out, 4/-.

"Tremendously topical. Ranges with provocative brilliance over stricken field of contemporary civilisation, tracing tragic effects to prime causes, weighing future hopes against present hazards. The rapid fire of his invective riddles just & possibly unjust targets alike" —Observer. *"His impatience & his vigour in expressing it run like a healthy high wind through all our problems & vexations"*—Sunday Times.

MANDER

"WE WERE NOT ALL WRONG." By GEOFFREY MANDER, M.P. 3rd edition, 2/6

The Guilty Men plead from the dock "Yes, we were guilty; but so was everyone." *Geoffrey Mander shows* by chapter & verse *that, on the contrary, the Liberal & Labour parties consistently pleaded for policies which would have saved us from our present perils. His book is in great demand. Carry it about, & help to save the peace. You will find in it just the quotation to confound the prevaricator.*

(Left Book Club Members can get *Dodd* at half price: write to Gollancz, 14 Henrietta St., for Club prospectus)

LARGE DEPARTMENT FOR POLITICAL BOOKS

FOYLES

BOOKSELLERS TO THE WORLD

New and secondhand Books on every subject. Stock of nearly 3 million volumes.

113-125, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON, W C 2

Telephone: Gerrard 5660 (16 lines)

UNIVERSITY CORRESPONDENCE COLLEGE

William Briggs Trust Ltd.

*

LONDON UNIVERSITY DEGREES

U.C.C., founded 1887, with its resident staff of highly qualified tutors, prepares students by post for the Matriculation, Special Entrance, Intermediate, and Degree examinations of London University. The College is an Educational Trust, not conducted primarily as a profit-making concern. Low fees; instalments. Textbook library. Free re-preparation in the event of failure. Over 10,000 U.C.C. students passed London University examinations during 1930-1940.

*

PROSPECTUS post free from the Registrar,

70 Burlington House, Cambridge

dominantly blue and orange picture post-card popular in Latin countries, and it carries a heavy burden of Mexican political and social problems, the agrarian problem, the race problem, the clerical problem. And old matter from Spain, such as the ethics of civil war, crops up now and again. Passages of a certain vividness and strength there are, but like Lawrence's lakeside scenes they are tourist snapshots, the impressions of an outsider strange to both the Spanish Mexicans and those of pure blood. The Mexican literary desert like other deserts is littered with the bones of unwise travellers.

The Celtic fringe tends also to be a desert area, haunted by disembodied ghosts, turning out little pieces about the Tuatha de Danaan and keening by turns. But barren as the general landscape is, the produce of the rare oasis is undeniably lush and fine. The literary geographer will however notice that the breaks in the Celtic desert are discovered or created by those who are least involved in its romantic atmosphere. The artfully disguised thinness of Yeat's poetry when it was imitative of the "poetic" translations of the Irish revival is in odd opposition to his later style, which comes close to the riddling allusiveness of the true primitive epics in which he had lost interest. *The Silver Darlings* hovers between the bogus poetic barrens and the richness of genuine literature. The hero is ominously named Finn the herring boat crews are modelled on the war bands of the epics, and there is a certain amount of the frenzy and black despair which lies in wait for the Gaelic hero. It is difficult for a Celtic writer not to fall for such elements when dealing with the material Mr. Gunn is writing about: his story is of the foundation of the Scotch herring fishery by the peasants uprooted by the great early nineteenth century evictions and the collapse of the clan system, a period which duplicates on a small scale the circumstances of the Hellenic *volkwanderung* which produced the original Finn saga. From time to time the fascination of the traditional literature takes charge of the story and it stiffens into the deadly rigor always produced by archaism, but in the main Mr. Gunn stays in contact with his own time and tells his story of that somewhat Abyssinian episode with an enjoyable directness and simplicity. A near-miss from being an excellent novel, it would have been a direct hit if drifts of Celtic mist had not obscured the target at a few vital moments.

Given that all the structure that a novel needs is provided if one character in a string of anecdotes should remain constant there can be no serious objection to *Fingal's Box*, a novel concerned with the first half of a doctor's professional life. The book takes him through his career, from medical student days, through a tricky little affair with a married patient, to snug harbour as a surgeon attached to a big London hospital. The fashion for medical novels shows no sign of wearing out and the time is overdue for their recognition as a genus worthy of separate notice under another heading, much as the detective story has been recognised as an independent branch. They might then receive notice as the formal exercises they have become, thus: "Dr. X is an engaging addition to the profession whose development, from the time he falls under the influence of the genial Professor Fallopius as a student, to the conclusion of the exacting research which is his life work, is enthralling. The laboratory scenes are excellent and the reader is treated to a large number of gripping operations. The discerning will be a little troubled to note that Dr. X uses the obsolete Schnitzel incision in removing a gall bladder on page 24, and that his grave breach of etiquette on page 987 is apparently intentional, a Medical Book club choice." Dr. Fingal is an engaging addition to the profession.

Light in Italy succeeds in being very good fun in spite of an untenable underlying thesis, that revolutionary politics are the salvation of artists unhappy in the academic fold. The theory doesn't matter in the least, one feels that it was not the *raison d'être* of the book so much as an afterthought pinned to an outbreak of sheer high spirits to give it dignity. The story concerns an English artist painting in Rome in 1816 and gives an account of his pursuit of the daughter of a respectable English couple making the grand tour, and as the pursuit reaches its climax a subplot springs to life bringing the story to an end with a farcical situation reminiscent of the *Contes Drolatiques*. Even if the story was not amusing the book would be entertaining, for its chief virtue lies in the intense presentation of the Italian setting, it has the vitality and sparkle of a good firework display.

Up at The Villa is a short story in which Mr. Maugham with an air of restraint tells an incredibly melodramatic anecdote about some particularly unpleasant English visitors to Florence. From a technical point of view it is brilliant performance in which it would be difficult to find a superfluous word. There is something delightful in the manner in which in so short a space three completely different types of male pride are presented and exposed to a particularly deadly type of feminine sexual ethics. An enjoyable *tour de force*. ANTHONY WEST

Public Utilities and the National Power Policies. By JAMES C. BONBRIGHT. *Oxford University Press.* 8s. 6d.

A major, perhaps the major, political and social problem of the post-war world will be the public control or regulation of monopolies, whether of the so-called natural type or of the artificially created type. We have never really given serious consideration to the problem in this country—hence the confusion of our pre-war planning—and the economic and legal literature on the subject is very meagre. Moreover, there is an almost complete divorce between the economic and the legal approach. In the U.S.A. the situation is different. For various reasons, among them the practical complications arising from the conflict between State and Federal rights, the problem has aroused considerable controversy and the literature is enormous. An impressive expert on the subject is Professor James C. Bonbright, who has outstanding qualifications both on the economic and the legal side. In this small book he summarises the problem of public utility control, illustrating it by reference to the supply of electricity. As an incidental feature the reader will learn how Mr. Wendell Willkie fits into the American social scheme as an opponent of Mr. Roosevelt. Professor Bonbright presents the issues with admirable succinctness and if the other essays in this series on the economics of public policy come up to this standard they will constitute an admirable guide to the new order which inevitably is coming on both sides of the Atlantic. It is to be hoped that one feature of this new order will be an exchange rate which does not translate $1.25 into 8s. 6d.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

VERDI: *Otello:* Famous Passages. Lawrence Tibbett, Giovanni Martinelli, Helen Jepson; with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, cond. Wilfred Pelletier (H.M.V.).

GRIEG: *With a Primrose, Thanks for thy Rede, Spring Rain; The Autumn Storm* and *A Swan; There Screamed a Bird, The First Meeting, Love, I Love Thee; Verse for an Album, With a Waterlily, Rock, O Wave.* Sung (in Norwegian) by Astra Desmond, acc. Gerald Moore (Decca).

FAURÉ: *Après un Rêve*, and

HAHN: *Si mes Vers avaient des Ailes.* Maggie Teyte, acc. Gerald Moore (H.M.V.).

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Silent Noon*, and

SOMERVELL: *Loveliest of Trees.* John McCormack, acc. Gerald Moore (H.M.V.).

BRAHMS: *Trio in A minor*, op. 114, for Piano, Clarinet and Cello. Louis Kentner, Reginald Kell and Anthony Pini (Col.).

The *Politics* of FOOD

by

George Darling

An exposure of capitalism's failure to feed the people adequately in peace or war, and bold constructive proposals to meet present conditions. 5s. net

¶ *To be published next week*

SIR WALTER CITRINE'S

My American Diary

5s. net

ROUTLEDGE

"Full-blooded and stimulating"
—HECTOR BOLITHO

"This grandly written book"
—EMRYS JONES (*Daily Mail*)

Eric Baume's

I LIVED THESE YEARS

Australia's foremost war correspondent, born in Auckland, worked in Sydney in the tough 1920's. He watched American opinion forming on Britain's pre-war policy; he was with the B.E.F. in France and is now in London. "His views . . . are certainly expressed with vigorous ability and are well worth reading."—YORKSHIRE POST

2nd printing 10/6 *net*

Gen. Wavell's

ALLENBY

This "model military biography" and brilliant exposition of the tactics of desert warfare is fascinating and enlightening for the layman at the present time.

4th impression Illustrated 18/- *net*

HARRAP BOOKS

What can I do..

when my BRAEMAR *wears out?*

Even a Braemar can't last for ever, but you can give it a new lease of life in wartime by sending it for a 'Stitch-in-Time'. Yes, your cherished Braemar Knitwear and Underwear can now be repaired, re-shaped or whatever you want. With rough, tough wear—Braemar elbows may go, undies fray, skirts need grooming. Ask your Braemar retailer about this important new 'Stitch-in-Time' Service or write to address below for new booklet giving full details.

SEND IT TO THE

BRAEMAR

'Stitch-in-Time'

SERVICE

THROUGH YOUR RETAILER

SAVES MEN'S THINGS, TOO! Send your husband's pet pullovers, vests, even pants—for rebinding, replacing worn parts, etc., etc. A 'Stitch-in-Time' makes them good as new again.

INNES, HENDERSON & CO. LTD., HAWICK, SCOTLAND

Here's GOOD NEWS of ASPRO Service!

There's always good news in the 'ASPRO' mail bag—news of **nerves soothed—sleeplessness overcome—pain banished—colds, rheumatic twinges, neuralgia, etc., dispelled.** Every day we get letters that make us feel proud that 'ASPRO' is rendering so much service—**giving so much comfort to the people**—helping to keep the wheels of industry turning full speed. Published in our advertisements their good news is conveyed to a vast public. Many are helped by reading them. Encouraged to try 'ASPRO' for themselves **they find new health, new hope and courage to GET ON WITH THE JOB in Services, in factory, in field or the home.** We suggest you read these letters yourself. They contain :—

A Message for YOU!

Nurse's Tribute—Evacuee Mothers HELPED!

Dear Sirs,—

I find so much scope for 'ASPRO' in these times of Air-Raids. **It is remarkable how your preparation will calm a patient** *when they are near panic.*

Thanking you for the interest that you have always shown towards the Nursing Profession.

I am, Yours faithfully,
V. D. (S.R. Nurse).

Nurse V. D. has since written as follows :—

. . . We still have a lot of evacuees coming from ——— and an **'ASPRO' is a Godsend to a worn mother.** *(Name and address withheld for professional reasons.)*

'ASPRO' Kept Me Out of Bed and At My Job

L. J. ASPINALL writes from 42, Fair View Avenue, Newtown, Geelong, Victoria :—"A few days ago I caught a sudden cold and it was very much like the 'flu. **I had to keep going at work so I got my wife to make me a hot lemon drink and I took three 'ASPRO' tablets** *with it and tumbled into bed. During the night I perspired very much but* **was much better in the morning and able to go to work.** *I am sure if I hadn't taken 'ASPRO' I would have been laid up with a very bad cold."*

HOW TO USE 'ASPRO' AS A GARGLE

Two 'ASPRO' tablets in four tablespoonfuls of water make an excellent gargle for sore throat, tonsillitis, and act as a deterrent.

'ASPRO' consists of the purest Acetylsalicylic Acid, and its claims are based on its superiority.

Made in England by ASPRO Ltd., Slough, Bucks.

No proprietary right is claimed in the method of manufacture or the formula.

ASPRO

ALL LEADING CHEMISTS AND STORES STOCK AND DISPLAY 'ASPRO'

PRICES INCLUDING PURCHASE TAX

3½D · 7D · 1/5 · 2/10

VITAL BOOKS

Your purchase of one or other of the books described in this advertisement is not an extravagance, but a wise and profitable investment. It is impossible to measure the worth of these publications by their published price. The Health benefits, both Physical and Mental, and the Vital Information provided to you represents safe and positive dividends which will repay your investment many times over. Endorsed and recommended by the highest authorities, these books are of vital importance. Make your selection now.

THE TECHNIQUE OF SEX

By ANTHONY HAVIL, B.A. Post paid **5/6**

Written by a young medical man specialising in Obstetrics and Gynæcology, this new illustrated work is a complete guide to every aspect of sex. The contents cover—Anatomy—Physiology—The Psychology of Sex—The Sex Act—Pregnancy and Labour — Contraception — Abortion — Venereal Diseases — Prostitution—Impotence and Sterility.

"Within the pages of this book is contained a survey of the Anatomy, Physiology, Psychology, and Sociology of sex. The feat has been performed by Mr. Havil in a competent fashion. The subject could not be more adequately dealt with within the limitations of a work of this size."

Cambridge University Medical Society Magazine.

By RENNIE MACANDREW.

LIFE LONG LOVE

Healthy Sex and Marriage Post paid **5/-**

The purpose of this book is to prevent or help solve some of the problems of love in men and women, and to increase human understanding.

"Its great merit consists in its straightforwardness of expression . . . its scientific simplicity. It should prove a very useful textbook." *New Statesman and Nation.*

"—eminently sensible but far from dull . . . Particularly refreshing. . . . The book will be appreciated by those who are tired of the stupidities that have been published."

Cambridge University Medical Society Magazine.

APPROACHING MANHOOD
APPROACHING WOMANHOOD
Each, post paid **3/10**

Parents, teachers, religious leaders and social workers recognise the vital need of accurate books of sex instruction for boys and young men, girls and young women. These books adequately fill that need.

"In every way admirable for the purpose—simply and concisely written—pleasantly informative. . . ."

Cambridge University Medical Society Magazine.

FRIENDSHIP, LOVE AFFAIRS AND MARRIAGE. Post paid **5/-**

"An explanation of men to women and women to men—to clarify ideas—to illustrate the differences of Friendship, Love and Marriage. . . . . Many people will find it very helpful . . . . a wealth of practical hints . . . ."

Cambridge University Medical Society Magazine.

THE RED LIGHT. Post paid **1/9**

A book of sane and logical instruction on Intimate Hygiene for Men and Women.

"Frankly written—sincere and unsuggestive—as indispensable to those in uniform as a Service Gas Mask—the best eighteenpenny worth in its line yet published."

Superman.

THE REALITIES OF MARRIAGE. By Dr. G. C. BEALE. This work deals in a comprehensive manner with the whole subject. It is a necessary book alike for the married and those contemplating marriage **6/6**

WOMAN'S CHANGE OF LIFE. An entirely practical book which will prove of inestimable value to every woman. "Modern Woman" says :—"Middle-aged women will find much to help them" ... **5/6**

THE RIDDLE OF SEX. By Dr. J. TENENBAUM. This work gives answers to all questions concerning sex. It includes a minimum of theory and the maximum of direct physiological information ... **8/-**

FAMILY LIMITATION—The Natural Way. By D. MURRAY DAVEY. To many people, because of religious or other convictions, artificiality in the matter of Birth Control is repugnant. This new book is intended for those people. It describes in detail a proved method ... **1/3**

THE HEART. The Prevention and Cure of Cardiac Conditions. By JAS. C. THOMSON. The author in this book presents in non-technical language an explanation of the Natural treatment of Heart Diseases **4/-**

BLOOD PRESSURE. By JAS. C. THOMSON. The how and why of low and high blood pressure and the simple naturopathic home treatment for this prevalent condition is fully explained **4/-**

MEMORY EFFICIENCY AND HOW TO OBTAIN IT. By J. L. ORTON. An efficient memory is the basis of all success. This book shows you "How to memorise, How to acquire a photographic memory," etc., etc. **4/-**

BETTER SIGHT WITHOUT GLASSES. By H. BENJAMIN. The author cured himself of approaching blindness, and has embodied his methods in this book ... **4/4**

HOW TO OBTAIN HEALTHY HAIR. By JAS. C. THOMSON. With full particulars of the Home Treatment for Scalp Disorders, including Baldness, Dandruff, Alopecia Areata, Falling Hair, etc. ... **1/3**

All Prices Include Postage.

THORSONS, Publishers
Dept. 169, 91, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, LONDON, W.C.2
Complete Catalogue Free on Request.

BEETHOVEN : *Sonata in G.*, op. 30, No. 3, for Violin and Piano. Ida Haendel and Noel Newton-Wood (Decca).

DVORAK : *Quartet in F*, op. 96. Budapest String Quartet (H.M.V.).

SCHUBERT-FORBES : *Arpeggione Sonata*. Watson Forbes (viola) and Myers Foggin (piano) (Decca).

RACHMANINOFF : *Prelude in G flat*, op. 23, No. 10, and *Prelude in E*, op. 32, No. 3. Rachmaninoff (H.M.V.).

BRAHMS : *Intermezzo*, op. 117, No. 1, and 119, No.3, and *Capriccio*, op. 116, No. 7. Myra Hess (H.M.V.).

BACH : *Prelude and Fugue in C sharp*, and *Sleepers Awake*, arr. Kempff. Wilhelm Kempff (Decca).

PROKOFIEFF : *Classical Symphony*, op. 25. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, cond. Dimitri Mitropoulos (Col.).

GRIEG : *Norwegian Melodies*, op. 53. Boyd Neel String Orchestra (Decca).

BACH-CAILLIET : *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*, and *Prelude in E*. Philadelphia Orchestra, cond. Ormandy (H.M.V.).

THAT world events should have drawn our attention back to the limited, but very real, merits of Grieg is one of those dim little mercies we have learnt to appreciate nowadays. The piano pieces, the sonatas, the piano concerto, are no doubt too much with us, so that we have grown to overlook their admirable qualities; of the songs we do not hear enough. For Grieg was a born *Lieder*-writer, with a "domestic" but delicate and pure vision of Nature not unlike that of Christina Rossetti, whose poems it is a pity he did not set. For not only did he possess the gift of nineteenth-century romantic melody, with its vocal origin in Schubert, but also a poetical temperament of his own. This shows itself most clearly in a pronouncedly individual harmony which probably had its rise in Chopin, but certainly looked forward to Impressionists like Debussy and Delius. If Grieg lacks the scope of the great Germans, he has a constant refinement they do not always command. Though sometimes mere, he is never vulgar, and the famous *I Love Thee* demonstrates how near the wind a considerable composer can sail without foundering on the rock of Maud Valerie White —a rock on which Delius's *Queen of my Heart* does actually founder. *Spring Rain* and the really superb *Rock, O Wave*, are both deeply Impressionist; but what is so striking about all these songs is the extraordinary *rightness* and flexibility of the vocal writing. Such sequences, one feels as one listens, belong only to the voice; even Fauré's exquisite (and here exquisitely sung) *Après un Rêve* can be imagined as a perfectly satisfactory violin solo; not so *With a Primrose* or *Rock, O Wave*, in which everything in a voice which is not the actual note (breathing, timbre, delivery, etc.) also receives its due. With a poor singer this would be a disadvantage, since most voices are no better than defective wind instruments; but with so admirably intelligent and technically accomplished an artist as Miss Astra Desmond the result is pure delight. Though a contralto, her voice has none of that fog-horn quality one associates with English contraltos; her command of Norwegian is so remarkable as to seem natural; her understanding of the quality of the songs is complete; and with Gerald Moore to aid and abet, perfection is very near.

So, too, with Miss Teyte and John McCormack. But in the latter case one cannot but deplore the obvious fact that—at any rate since the eighteenth century—the English have lost the art of writing voice-lines which seem at all inevitably vocal. Compare *Silent Noon* with Rachmaninoff's juicy *Prelude in G flat*—a song without words if ever there was one, and full of decadeat charm. It is not that Vaughan Williams's invention is here without beauty, but that one would listen to it with greater comfort if, like the Rachmaninoff, its melody were handed about among the manifold voices of the piano alone; as vocal writing, its accents are heavy and insistent, the rise and fall unimaginative and monotonous. This song and *Loveliest of Trees*, regarded as English counterparts of *Love* and *Si mes Vers*, are deplorably inferior, and, moreover, draw attention to the quality of commonness all too frequent in English music of the last hundred years. Without the aid of words, Rachmaninoff recollects a far more adequate vision of passion in quietness.

It would be a fascinating task to explore the country which separates the pure lyricism of Grieg and Fauré from the dramatic vocal style of Verdi's masterpiece; but I have only space enough here to recommend this new set of excerpts for the generally high quality of performance and recording. Tibbett is a great Iago and the sardonic virility of his magnificent voice comes through very well; he manages the arioso of the "Credo" better than any other singer I have heard, and dispenses (thank Heaven!) with that embarrassing guffaw which is the customary conclusion to it. Martinelli, a most tender and felicitous tenor, is at his best in the monologue from Act 3—perhaps the finest single passage in the opera—and in *Niun mi tema*, in both of which he suggests overwhelming emotion by simply singing, often *mezza voce*, and without the aid of sobs. On the other hand, I wish the Victor Co. had not chosen to include Miss Jepson in their cast: her loud, self-confident voice suggests anyone rather than Desdemona, and although her singing of *Salce* is fairly acceptable, one thinks regretfully of Melba, as also in the *Ave Maria*; for pathos seems remarkably absent from Miss Jepson's make-up. The orchestral part of the whole performance is well balanced with the voices, and in itself often thrilling in quality.

Brahm's *Clarinet Trio* is one of his last works; it belongs to the world of the *Four Serious Songs*; it is magnificent and sad and distinguished by the extreme beauty of its themes, by the absolute mastery with which Brahms handles the instruments. The Adagio would seem to exhaust the possibilities of beautiful imitation; so that when, in the inevitable Andantino (in itself charming) which does duty for a Scherzo, Brahms pursues the same course, one feels that the procedure is being slightly abused. In view of the ponderous nature of the whole work, it seems in any case a mistake not to have lightened the atmosphere more considerably after the Adagio, particularly as the combination of instruments almost unavoidably produces a "grumpy" effect of too much bass. The present performance, however, does as much as possible to lighten this impression, and the set is most vehemently to be recommended, for this Trio is not so much inferior to the Clarinet Quintet as to deserve to be so very much less well known.

A deficient contrapuntal sense, when inspiration flags, results in sheer feebleness—as often in Liszt, sometimes in Schumann (e.g., the Symphonies), occasionally even in Beethoven. Certainly, however, in the case of Schubert's *Arpeggione Sonata*, which is only rescued from silliness by an occasional piece of spontaneous felicity such as Schubert can always be relied on to produce. Watson-Forbes's transcription is most adroit and ably executed in performance. Sufficiently fine themes might have saved this work: they were not needed for Beethoven's *opus* 30, a sprightly contemporary of the Second Symphony which relies on subtle and thorough exploration of simple sentences. The Finale is a remarkable example of forward movement; by the aid of artful key-shifts and pauses at unexpected moments Beethoven achieves a *perpetuum mobile* that is not just buzz. The

VICTORY

An artist's impression of Victoria, the Latin Goddess of Victory.

MUST BE OURS

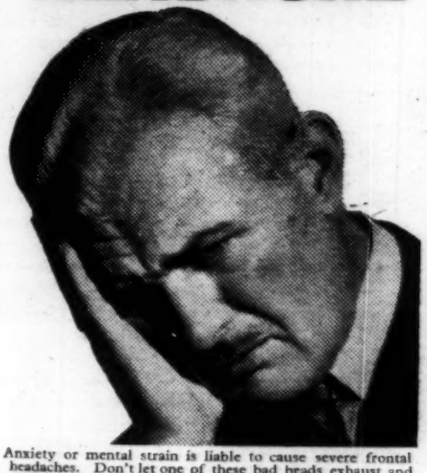
Over 70,000 died from Cancer last year. Their tragic end should resolve us all to make even greater efforts to combat and defeat the grave menace of this disease.

Here at The Royal Cancer Hospital our resources are being extended to the utmost limits. The work of Treatment and Research, despite the War, continues unabated. But the mounting costs threaten to impede our way to success. Thousands of pounds have to be spent yearly to keep our doors always open to unfortunate sufferers. Will you please help us in this humane task ?

The Royal Cancer Hospital
(FREE)
FULHAM ROAD, LONDON, S.W.3

RELIEF FROM THE WORST

HEADACHE



Anxiety or mental strain is liable to cause severe frontal headaches. Don't let one of these bad heads exhaust and disable you—take 2 tablets of Phensic and rest a few minutes. Phensic is safe, quick—and **SURE.**

" I have been a martyr to Migraine until I was told a few weeks ago to try Phensic. I took two of your most wonderful tablets and in ten minutes I was free from pain and feeling fit."
M. S., Luton

SIMPLY TAKE
2 Tablets of

Prices 3½d, 7d, 1/5, 3/5 and 5/8
(Including Purchase Tax)

Phensic

Pronounced 'FEN-ZIK' BRAND

TWO TABLETS GIVE MAGIC RELIEF

A DEGREE FOR YOU!

The Matriculation exam. need not deter those who have left their school days behind. London University Degree candidates over 23 may take the *shorter* Special Entrance Exam. Wolsey Hall Postal Courses offer many advantages: low fees, instalment terms, free loan of books, and, in the event of failure, continuation of tuition free of charge. 978 Wolsey Hall students have passed this examination.

Write for Free Guide to C. D. Parker, M.A., LL.D., Director of Studies, Department VH12,

WOLSEY HALL, OXFORD

SPECIALISED TRAINING

THE BEDFORD PHYSICAL TRAINING COLLEGE, 37 Lansdowne Road, Bedford. Principal: MISS STANSFELD. Students are trained in this College to become teachers of gymnastics. The course of Training extends over 3 years. Fee £165 per annum. For prospectus apply SECRETARY.

PERSONAL

WRITER and wife offer peaceful holiday (Essex), week or fortnight during summer, to 1 or 2 women writers. Only modest food out-of-pockets asked. Box 9227.

MARRIED couple (professional class) offer home two or three children over nine. Midland suburb. Own milk, eggs, vegetables. Good school near. Moderate terms. Box 9285.

A CAPABLE and versatile young woman (25), experienced Froebel teacher, perfect German, knowledge Art, desires congenial change. Box 9276.

MOST PERFECT Health Loaf is " BERMALINE " Bread full of natural nutriment, including Vitamin B. Win through on " BERMALINE." Ask your Baker, or write BERMALINE," Fairley St., Glasgow, S.W.1.

SHORT-STORY WRITING. There is a short cut to successful story-writing—the Regent way. Send for free booklet. REGENT INSTITUTE (191H), Palace Gate, W.8.

MONOMARKS. Permanent London address. 5s. p.a. Patronised by Royalty. Write BM/MONO 12, W.C.1.

ACCORDING to A. S. Neill " Kingston is right in every way." Particulars :—Secretary, Kingston Clinic, Edinburgh, 9.

MISS OLLIVIER, Colonic Irrigation, Rheumatism, Constipation. Trained. Write Colnbrook, Bucks. Wel. 9711.

HOTELS

KINGSLEY HOTEL. Near the British Museum. Telephones in all bedrooms. From 9s. 6d. per night.

ASK for descriptive list (3d. post free) of 165 INNS and HOTELS managed by the PEOPLE'S REFRESHMENT HOUSE ASSOCIATION, LTD.
P.R.H.A. LTD., 193 Regent Street, W.1.

GUEST-HOUSE on own dairy farm in heart of Devon. Safe area, splendid scenery. Abundant food, car for guests. Terms from 3 *gns.* Children not taken. Eastchurch, Hittisleigh, Devon.

WOODSTOCK Guest House, Charlton, Singleton, Sussex. Mod. entry. hse., every comf. 3 *gns.* p.w. Singleton 200.

WOODY-BAY HOTEL, Parracombe, N. Devon. Quiet, peaceful, safe area. H. & C. all rooms, spring mattresses, good food, farm produce, central heating, licensed. From 3½ *guineas*, inclusive. Parracombe 64.

ROCKINGHAM, Westward Ho ! Devon. Quiet, comf. hse. peaceful sur. Mod. inc. terms. MISS FOLL. Northam 183.

ACCOMMODATION

SAFER LONDON. Comf. rooms and good meals at reasonable prices. 91 Fellows Road, N.W.3. PRImrose 6156.

HOLLAND PARK. Furn. room in private flat, g.f., c.h.w., suit student or professional lady. Park 5201. Box 9255.

15 MILES London. To people occupied during day. Bed-sitting room from £1 7s. 6d. Quiet private house, n.. rain and Bus. Breakfast only. State occupation. Box 9275.

Wanted

CAMBRIDGE. From mid-June to August, small furnished flat or cottage. Central or Grantchester. Box 9240.

YOUNG Wife wishes share cottage with mother and child. "Greenhills," Sutton Abinger, Dorking, Surrey. Abinger 351.

TYPEWRITING, LITERARY, &c.

DUPLICATING, TYPEWRITING, SHORTHAND, Manuscripts, Plays, Specifications. METROPOLITAN TYPEWRITING AND REPORTING OFFICES, 2 Glenhurst Avenue, London, N.W.5. CHA. 7839 and SPE. 2820.

FOR efficient Duplicating and Typing—EFFICIENCY LETTER SERVICE, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Holborn 0158 (same building as *New Statesman*).

WRITE FOR PROFIT. Send for free booklet. REGENT INSTITUTE (Dept. 191A), Palace Gate, W.8.

YOUR SURPLUS REVIEW COPIES, and any other Books Bought for Cash. L. SIMMONDS, 184 FLEET STREET, E.C.4. (Holborn 5440.)

CONSTITUTION OF THE EMPIRE OF ETHIOPIA
Granted by the Emperor Haile Sellassié in 1931.
Translation, with Introduction and Speech, just issued by the ABYSSINIA ASSOCIATION, 33 Maunsel Street, Westminster, S.W.1. Post free, 4d.

HITLER'S HOBBY

is geo-politics—the compelling influence of geography upon history. It may yet bring him down.

No periodical, except Serial Map Service, devotes itself exclusively to geo-politics. Each month its subscribers get a unique service: a batch of specially prepared colour maps and charts, produced by the world's finest cartographers, containing information on current affairs inaccessible elsewhere.

These maps provide a solid basis of fact for listening, discussing, thinking about the war; and become, at the end of a period, a unique atlas in loose-leaf form.

There are also objective commentaries, economic, military, naval, air, elucidating the lessons of the maps.

Would you like a specimen Serial Map without charge? Ask for it, on a postcard, to :—

SERIAL MAP SERVICE
LETCHWORTH, HERTS
or call at 66 Chandos Place, Charing Cross, London

PURELY PERSONAL

MAJOR quartered in Irak wishes to know the Coptic for " A box of King Six 8d. Cigars please."

COMING OF AGE
of The London School of Journalism

To mark this anniversary HALF FEES accepted for first 200 enrolments for personal coaching (by correspondence) in SHORT STORY or ARTICLE WRITING. Free copy of **WRITING FOR THE PRESS** from Prospectus Office, **LONDON SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, 57, Gordon Square, W.C.1.** Mus. 4574

FALSE TEETH
and false economy

Artificial teeth can only effectively replace natural ones as long as they fit absolutely perfectly. To persist in wearing a loose denture which causes discomfort and embarrassment is false economy because the trouble can so easily be put right. KOLYNOS DENTURE FIXATIVE, *for making false teeth fit firmly*, will hold it securely in position for many hours, ensuring comfort, confidence and proper mastication. Recommended by Dentists. Handy sprinkler tin 1/3d, large 'Economy' size 3/3d, from all Chemists.

KOLYNOS DENTURE FIXATIVE

is NOT liable to Purchase Tax and is NOT restricted by the Limitation of Supplies Act.

FOR SALE, TO LET AND WANTED

TO LET, Hampstead, unfurnished or part-furnished flat, 3 rms., kitchen, bathrm. Reason rent owing to evacuation. MURRAY, Central Laboratory, Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Bucks.

W.C.2. Well-furnished office—with electric light—(1s. in slot gas stove), telephone and switchboard service. Rent £65 p.a. (includes cleaning). Apply Box 9278.

SAFE AREA. Surrey farmhouse, furnished or part furnished, 3 *gns.*, or might sell. 8 rooms, kitchen, bath, garden 2½ acres, tennis-court, garage. 1-2 miles bus, 30 miles London. Box 9280.

UNFURNISHED flat or share cottage wanted north or north-west, outside London, about 30-45 minutes City, for woman and son ; 20s. to 25s. ; preferably gas, electricity ; earliest possible. Write Box 9260.

WANTED, unfurn. house, 4–6 bed., Farnham, Fleet, Cove, Camberley, Winchfield or Farnborough. Box 9258.

WANTED to rent, October, or earlier, unfurnished modernised residence, 3–5 bedrooms, h. & c., central heating preferred, adjoining or near second house or other building suitable light pharmaceutical manfacturing (under Factory Act), 2–3,000 sq. ft. (approximately 8 medium sized rooms), gas, electricity, water essential. 20–80 miles S.W., W. or N.W. London. Reasonable rent and long lease (if required). Box 9257.

recording of this very objective work is entirely suitable, with smooth and unobtrusive violin tone throughout.

Dvorák's "Nigger" *Quartet* pretends only to charm—and succeeds, of course; for it is immediately attractive both in themes and general harmonic texture—opportunities of which the Budapest quartet make the very most. I have never heard the *cantilena* of the Lento more skilfully played.

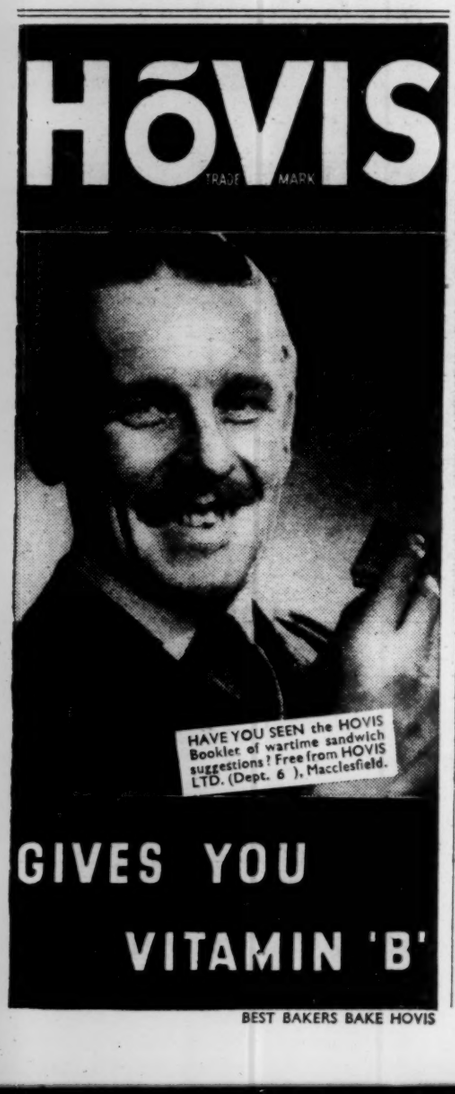
Miss Hess contributes a record which is both cheap and well worth while to all Brahmsians, though I wish she had not hurried each *reprise* of the theme in the *E flat Intermezzo*, a Christmassy little poem which calls for a perfectly smooth tempo.

I would commend the new Kempff disc especially to pianists, who will find much to interest them in an essentially romantic performance distinguished by iron control and deliberation, and a most sensitive touch. On the other hand, Cailliet's orchestral versions of Bach remind me of that remark in *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*: "I know hills in comparison with which you'd call that a valley"; for the horribly elaborate and tasteless orchestration (harps included) succeeds somehow in making the purest contrapuntal writing sound homophonic. How a fine musician like Ormandy can bring himself to conduct such stuff passes understanding.

An adequate recording of Prokofieff's early and wholly delightful *Classical Symphony* already exists (H.M.V.); but the new issue has distinct virtues of its own, one of which is to achieve a slightly different balance in the Larghetto, which now reveals, rather surprisingly, the features of Sibelius. Nevertheless, this little work is a good deal more than mere pastiche: familiarity with it breeds affection. Side four contains the Scherzo from Mendelssohn's youthful *Octet* (orchestrated by himself)—a lovely piece of gossamer slightly torn by being rushed.

Most people will, I think, prefer *The First Meeting* as sung by Miss Desmond in its original form. The string version, though it provides an occasion for the Boyd Neel ensemble to show what it can do in the way of tranquil *legato*, is really just a piece of inflation. *Norwegian*, on the obverse, justifies itself better, being gay and vivid and clearly designed for the medium.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST


HOVIS
TRADE MARK
HAVE YOU SEEN the HOVIS Booklet of wartime sandwich suggestions? Free from HOVIS LTD. (Dept. 6), Macclesfield.
GIVES YOU
VITAMIN 'B'
BEST BAKERS BAKE HOVIS

Week-end Competitions

No. 591

Set by G. B. Dodington

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best lists of six words from the Oxford Dictionary that have become obsolete and could profitably be revived.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, June 9th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 588

Set by Raymond Mortimer

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best laudatory epigram, in not more than 12 lines, commemorating the centenary of the London Library.

Report by Raymond Mortimer

The London Library is to me the most precious building in London—despite the incongruous and needlessly ugly facade that set a fashion for disfiguring the beautiful Square. When treading its floor-gratings, I feel that I am moving through the visible labyrinths of the world's brain. Here is the monastery which, if the twentieth century were as civilised as the thirteenth, one would choose to inhabit. Hassall Pitman ends with the line "A hundred times was Hagberg right," while Doll Tearsheet pays just tribute to "The Cox who steers us to the winning bump." R. S. Jafray, N. B. Severn, William Stewart, Leslie Johnson, W. P. Meadway, Pirbrook and A. J. Blundell all did well. Sir Robert Winn would win the third prize, if there were one, with a poem in the style of Macaulay's *Armada*. David Freeman gets the second prize with the better of two entries (the other contained the charming couplet "The founder's ghost must grimly smile To see how few now read Carlyle"). And the first prize goes—it is not my fault that he is so brilliant—to Allan M. Laing.

FIRST PRIZE
THE LONDON LIBRARY
1841–1941

Here is a library, with learning stored,
Wherein chance flappers are quite frankly bored;
Since eighteen-forty-one its spartan note
Has always got the common reader's goat
By turning down, with faint contemptuous grins,
A solid century of Godfrey Winns;
No library in London lets in fewer
Cheap choices of the popular reviewer.
Here culture's flag's defiantly unfurled
In welcome only to the thinking world;
And ever, when rude bombing 'planes shall roar,
There'll be a man to show the brutes the door.

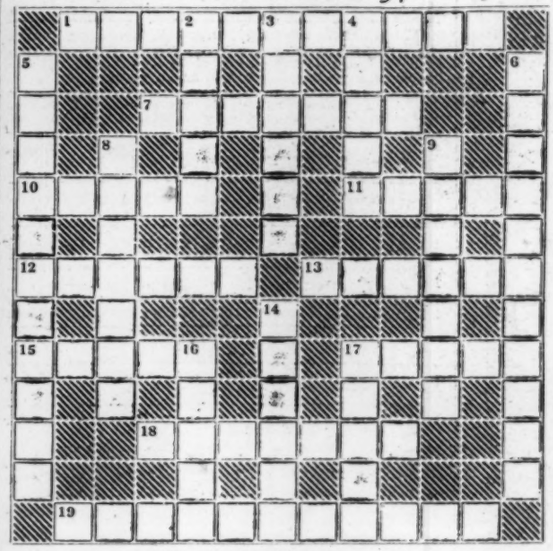
ALLAN M. LAING

SECOND PRIZE
THE CENTENARY OF THE LONDON LIBRARY

Within the square whose style proclaims
The memory of the second James
("Whose is the statue on the horse?
Why, his successor—Yes, of course!")
A corner, shadiest of nooks
Holds a centenary of books.
Around the square in houses tall
Premiers and peers held festival,
Now they have vanished in the night
The corner nook continues bright.
Although the blackout blacker looks,
We still have light while we have books.

DAVID FREEMAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 34 *Set by* V. S.



The last week's winner is:
E. F. Watling, 21, Sale Hill, Sheffield 10

ACROSS—

1 Openings For Cork Jam Makers. (6 hyphen 5)
7. An English Channel Port in Hants. (7)
10. (*rev.*) I'm simply hugged by my child. (5)
11 & 13. (*rev.*) Very French and very English. (11)
12. About, about, PUFF! (2 hyphen 4)
13. (*rev.*) See 11
15. She is called South American. (5)
17. Do decapitate little by little. (5)
18. A MORNING ON THE HEATH FOR US. (7)
19. Sound for song. (4 & 7).

DOWN—

2. Takes care to make 1/10*d.* over. (5)
3. Hen ought to be sufficiently prepared by removing head and tail. (6)
4. Leave late and tuck in. (5)
5. Played for England? (7 hyphen 4)
6. Should mark time or halt in front of all sentries. (4 hyphen 7)
8. I am a journalist in Shanghai. (7)
9. Hardy heroine is over-age. (7)
14. Portends nothing either way. (6)
16. Only the sane make a rustic retreat. (5)
17. No end of duck @ about 9/-! (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," "NEW STATESMAN AND NATION," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By URBANUS

SAVINGS AND DIS-INVESTMENT — POLICY FOR PRICES—AUSTRALIAN CONVERSION—MARKS AND SPENCER

LONDONERS—and others—must not be carried away by the £120 millions raised in London's war weapons week. How much of the total represents real savings and how much dis-investment can only be guessed, but I fancy that the amount of real savings would probably disappoint Lord Kindersley. Dr. Einzig, in the *Financial News*, puts forward the rather extraordinary view that it is one of the advantages of the Savings campaign that it induces investors to liquidate some of their investments. The primary object of the War Weapons Week, he admits, is to absorb the purchasing power of those classes who, through the increase of their net earnings, are now in the position to spend more on "secondary goods" (meaning non-essentials or luxuries) than before the war. But the other object, he argues, is to discourage the liquidation of capital investments for the purpose of current consumption. Because investors do their patriotic bit at War Weapons Week by selling some of their investments, they are less likely, he thinks, to liquidate more of them for the requirements of their current consumption: indeed, they become more inclined to curtail their current purchases. This seems to me a far-fetched argument. There are quite a number of people who will liquidate their investments rather than see them decline further in market values and there are others who are to-day forced to live partly on their capital in order to maintain their standard of life.

* * *

Dis-investment may therefore be a necessity, but it is not a phenomenon to be welcomed. Real abstention from consumption is the only helpful result of the Savings Campaign. Dr. Einzig does well to point out that abstention from consumption, if not genuinely "saved," is best achieved by rationing, but, failing rationing, the next best thing is to discourage purchases of non-essentials or luxuries by allowing prices to rise to an altogether prohibitive level. Now this is where the Board of Trade seems to be going wrong. It has announced a revision of the Prices of Goods Act which will not only fix maximum prices for a number of essential goods, but will also fix profit margins on non-essential goods. In other words, the Board of Trade intends to prevent the rise in prices of luxuries instead of restricting their consumption by allowing prices to rise to prohibitive levels. This seems to be a mistaken policy. Wherever the Board of Trade cannot restrict consumption adequately by its quota system or by a rationing system it should surely allow the prices of goods to rise, provided the goods are not essential for the needs of the poorer classes.

* * *

The gilt-edged market, which naturally had to take a back seat during the War Weapons Week, began to recover on Tuesday, and finally went strongly ahead when the *Bismarck* had gone down. It is a tribute to the strength of the gilt-edged market that the Treasury has at last agreed to help the Commonwealth Government convert its high-coupon stock to a lower interest level. It is a course which I have recommended *ad nauseum* in these columns. Three loans are immediately concerned: the Commonwealth 4¾ per cent., Queensland 5 per cent. and Victoria 4½ per cent., all dated 1940/60, amounting in all to approximately £30,000,000. To facilitate the conversion operation, the Chancellor has agreed to advance from the Vote of Credit to the Commonwealth "such sums as may be necessary to repay any unconverted stock." Australia needs this help, for she is anxious not to deplete her sterling reserves in London, seeing that the British Treasury is advancing the cost of maintaining Australian forces overseas. Australia is not in the fortunate position of India, which is accumulating London balances of unwieldy size. In the case of Australia, there is a heavy external bill for interest. In the year to June, 1940, the Australian export surplus was, in fact, insufficient to pay the interest on the overseas debt. If London balances of the Commonwealth Government have risen, it is only because of an inflow of capital. If the conversion of these 30 millions of loans is of market success, the Commonwealth Government, with the Treasury help, can proceed to the conversion of the 4 per cent. stocks which have been callable since 1940, of which 14½ millions are outstanding.

* * *

I have continually argued that consumption goods shares are relatively over-valued and that the market has not appreciated the contraction of home trade which is taking place. Mr. Simon Marks, in his survey of the Marks and Spencer trading for the year to 31st March, confirms my investment policy. The full impact of the rationing of raw materials and the limitation of supplies has not yet been felt, he says, but for the rest of the war the word of command is contraction for Marks and Spencer instead of expansion. Marks and Spencer 5*s.* ordinary shares at around 31/3, which yield just over 5½ per cent. on last year's lower dividend of 35 per cent., still seem to me over-valued relatively to the capital goods shares which can be purchased on a yield basis of 10 per cent. or more.

Company Meeting

NORWICH UNION LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY

RECORD VALUATION SURPLUS

THE 133rd Annual General Meeting of the Norwich Union Life Insurance Society was held on May 27th at Norwich.

Mr. Ernest Hicks (the President) said he thought it would be agreed that a new business total of £6,791,319 reflected the greatest credit upon their representatives in this country and throughout the Dominions.

He was sorry he had to report a considerable decrease in the rate of interest in their invested funds. The gross rate was £4 8*s.* 2*d.* per cent., a reduction of 5*s.* 11*d.* per cent. on the 1939 figures, and the net rate fell to £3 10*s.* 4*d.* per cent., showing a reduction of 7*s.* 9*d.* per cent. However, the Society had for 40 years maintained its reserves on a 2½ per cent. net interest earning basis.

They were fully satisfied that a conservative value had been placed upon the investments, and the Stock Exchange securities stood in the balance sheet at or below the middle market prices ruling on December 31st last. On the conservative bases he had indicated the Actuary reported a net surplus of £5,174,554 after paying £396,731 in respect of interim bonuses during the quinquennium. This was the largest surplus ever disclosed in the history of the Society and policyholders might perhaps have expected that this would have justified the directors in declaring a bonus. They felt, however, that it was necessary to exercise the utmost caution in these days. In the best view, therefore, the directors would have considered it necessary to carry forward a very large sum of money, which would have necessitated a considerable reduction in their bonuses. They would provide for a valuation to be made as soon as practicable after the close of hostilities and any bonus then declared would be in respect of the period elapsed since December 31st, 1935. In the meantime they were continuing to pay for the four years 1936–39 inclusive interim bonuses at the full pre-war rates.

The report was unanimously adopted.

Company Meeting

ALLIANCE ASSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED

THE Annual General Court of the Alliance Assurance Company, Limited, was held in London last Wednesday. The Chairman, Mr. Lionel N. de Rothschild, said:

In the Life Department, the net new business completed during the year amounted to £1,226,174, as compared with £2,794,227 in 1939. This, I grant, is a considerable reduction, but I cannot hold out much hope of any material increase during the war.

The purchase money for immediate Annuities amounted to £61,086, about one-half the purchase money received in 1939. It was found necessary to increase the charges for this business.

The mortality experience of the Life Assurance business was not favourable, the claims by death being £826,027. The experience in 1939 was an exceptionally favourable one, at £589,794. I think, however, that the truest measure of the mortality is obtained by comparing the actual claims (after allowing for the reserves held) with the corresponding expected strain, and on this basis there was a mortality loss in 1940 of £45,000, against a mortality profit of £86,000 in 1939.

At the close of the year the Alliance Life and Annuity Funds amounted to £22,822,735, an increase of £35,700 for the year.

In view of the low net rate of interest obtainable on fresh investments, our Actuary recommended that the rates for new non-profit assurances should be revised in an upward direction.

In the Fire Department the net premiums amounted to £2,175,619, being £20,789 less than those in 1939. The Home premiums, I am glad to say, have again shown an increase, but this has been more than offset by the reduction in the foreign premiums. The claims amount to £874,250, £134,202 more than in 1939.

After having made ample provision for doubtful debts for the adjustment of reserves for unexpired risks, and after the inclusion of interest (less tax) of £108,991, a balance of £351,342 has been carried to Profit and Loss Account.

In the Accident Department there has been a further reduction in the premium income, amounting to £122,095. The results in the Motor Section of our Accident business have considerably improved.

The surplus in the combined Accident Accounts for the year amounts to £134,744, and this sum, together with interest (less tax) of £50,021, has been transferred to Profit and Loss Account.

In the Marine Department, the net premiums are £951,675, an increase of £369,103 over last year.

The Underwriting Account for 1938 has now been closed with the very satisfactory balance of £83,834. The Reserve Fund is maintained at £300,000.

Turning to the Profit and Loss Account, you will see that expenses not charged to other accounts disclose a gratifying drop of more than £62,000 compared with 1939. We have transferred £100,000 to a new Reserve for War Contingencies, also £50,000 to the Staff Pension Fund. The balance shown in the Account is some £36,000 less than 1939. The amount required for dividends will, however, cost the Company about £63,000 less than last year. The Report and Accounts were adopted.

T

is for *Tribune*

every weekend 3d.

DON'T FORGET IT.